

***Oliver Vernon: Double Down***  
**New Paintings, Installations, and Wall Mural**

**Phil Nesmith, *Flight Patterns***  
**New Photograms**

**October 30 – December 12**

**Opening reception and discussion with the artists: Friday, October 30, 6-8 PM**

**Oliver Vernon's alley wall mural in progress: Saturday, October 30-31, 3-8PM**

Irvine Contemporary is pleased to present two solo exhibitions with gallery artists Oliver Vernon, *Double Down*, and Phil Nesmith, *Flight Patterns*, opening Friday, October 30.



Oliver Vernon, *Lifelines*, 2009. Gouache and ink on paper mounted on panel. 22.5 x 30 in.

Oliver Vernon's exhibition, *Double Down*, consists of new paintings in gouache and ink on paper and panel, and new, three-dimensional installations, which extend his compositional concepts into 3D space. This is Oliver Vernon's second solo exhibition with Irvine Contemporary. Oliver will also continue his wall mural compositions in the public installation space in the alley behind the gallery.

Oliver Vernon continues to find new ways to visualize a psychogeography of the contemporary world, mental maps that enfold the multiple forms of our built, urban environment, the hidden architecture of complex networks, and the shape of organic life. Vernon composes works that suspend together in one image the simultaneous forces of chaos and cosmos, complexity and fragmentation, flesh and

machine, nature and culture. His new series of paintings in gouache and ink and his three-dimensional installations take his signature approach to a new level: the works capture the push and pull of a globalized world at once connected by humanly designed architectures and elemental forces of life. We view the spatial and hidden architectures of cities and information networks, and our common fate in an ecosystem where life requires renewed human comprehension.

His paintings work to reveal a simultaneity--what is connected all at once and continuously, but what we can't see without a visual map. Multiple moments known in sequences of time are converted into layers of space. Refining his approach to working with multiple planes of space, the new works include three-dimensional installations that take us further into visual models for imagining the experience of simultaneous and interdependent worlds.

Oliver Vernon also combines bold graphic elements that quote graffiti and calligraphic styles fused with meditative and symbols. Working in gouache and ink in this new series of works also provides a density of color and line that perfectly matches the artist's conceptual direction. His work represents a new and confident fusion of many trajectories in contemporary painting never before combined in one coherent vision: post-pop surrealism, figural abstraction, street and graffiti art, and the multi-layered, complex visualizations of artists like Matthew Ritchie, Julie Mehretu, Fred Tomaselli, and Ryan McGinness.

Oliver Vernon lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. He is a graduate of the Parsons School of Design, and has had solo exhibitions this year with galleries in New York, Denver, and Toronto.

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**Phil Nesmith: *Flight Patterns***  
**New Photograms**

Phil Nesmith's *Flight Patterns* is a series of new dryplate photograms created with silver nitrate emulsion on black glass plates. This is Phil Nesmith's second solo exhibition with Irvine Contemporary.



Phil Nesmith, *Contained*, 2009. Varnished dryplate photogram on black glass. 18 x 13 in.

past decade, Chuck Close, Adam Fuss, and Sally Mann have re-appropriated early photographic methods for their images, and Wolfgang Tillmans has created several series of abstract, cameraless images made with controlled, direct exposures on photo paper. Phil Nesmith's photograms play with our expectations about photographic images and our desire to fix and objectify a moment in time, the sense of real things leaving a trace in the realm of imaginary fictions.

Phil Nesmith lives and works in Richmond, VA. He studied photography at the Rocky Mountain School of Photography, and studied wet plate collodion photography with John Coffey. He is pursuing his BFA at the Virginia Commonwealth University, and has already achieved recognition for his work in photography publications.

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Phil Nesmith's photograms are innovative images created directly on photosensitive black glass plates without a camera or lens. By re-appropriating one of the earliest photo-graphic processes, Nesmith continues his ongoing exploration of the effects of light and shadows and the memory images created by a brief moment of exposure on silver nitrate emulsion.

Nesmith's new series of images evoke allegories of flight, fragility, evanescence, materiality, and time. Because photograms require the presence of an actual object to cast shadows or allow light to penetrate through a translucent material, the resulting image records a moment in time when something interrupted light and space on the photosensitive medium, but without a camera lens.

Nesmith's haunting compositions present fictional worlds of flying creatures fixed in a moment we feel as both present and lost, timeless and absent, a memory of an imaginary moment created entirely by the play of light on material forms. Photograms of creatures of flight and short life-spans become fitting allegories of transience, life and time as a series of fleeting moments.

Phil Nesmith is engaging in a fascinating and important dialog with artists and photo-graphers who use hybrid and lensless photo images for conceptual ends, a project that extends back to Man Ray and earliest photography. In the