

## CLIFTON BENEVENTO

LOCATION: 515 BROADWAY NEW YORK NY 10012 PHONE: 212 431 6325 FAX: 212 334 4703  
EMAIL: INFO@CLIFTONBENEVENTO.COM WEBSITE: WWW.CLIFTONBENEVENTO.COM

# COLUMBIA SPECTATOR

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## Dylan Spaysky's 'Tacky Glue' to display sculptures made from mundane household objects



SoHo's Clifton Benevento Gallery is emphasizing the value of unconventionality with "Tacky Glue," a new solo exhibition of recent work by Detroit-based artist Dylan Spaysky.

In the fantastical space of "Tacky Glue," clocks are constructed from plastic-wrapped oranges and pears, coffee mugs and pots made of neon-colored foam, and harps strung from wine corks and uninspiring floral home decorations. The eccentric objects share the common theme of tacky glue quite literally—it is Spaysky's choice of adhesive for the sculptures.

Spaysky first considered using tacky glue in his sculptures when a friend suggested that it was more flexible than Elmer's Glue, which Spaysky had previously used to

assemble carved blocks of foam. He was surprised to discover that tacky glue was already a prevalent binder among circles of crafters.

Growing up in the Midwest, Spaysky found inspiration in the garage sales and thrift stores that pop up when suburban homeowners run out of uses—and storage space—for their miscellaneous domestic purchases.

"There's a whole system of thrift stores and garage sales and places where you could buy interesting objects for a relatively decent price," Spaysky said, "because people around here just end up collecting things and then not knowing what to do with it, and eventually basements are cleaned out. It's just something that's all around me."

Faced with an excess of gadgets that homeowners now considered obsolete, Spaysky found himself wondering about the objects' backstories. He hopes to convey a similar sense of mystery to the viewers of his exhibit.

"Most of the objects that I use have prior histories to them that are what I like to call 'there but not

specific.’ When you buy something from a garage sale, you kind of know that area and the type of people, and the object sort of implies the type of person that owned the thing, but it’s also a complete mystery because I don’t know who owned that object and what they had done with it in the past,” Spaysky said.

On the flip side, Spaysky infuses the “useless” objects with new life when he reshapes them into bizarre sculptures and into warped imitations of functional daily appliances. However, Spaysky warned that it is important to note that his sculptures are still far from real life. The sculptures merely pass off the illusion of functionality—for all practical purposes, they remain useless.

“They’re very impractical. They’re just on the verge of not working well. I think it’s a little bit sad and uplifting all at once. [The sculpture is] really trying to be this thing but so broken and strange [that] there’s something endearing about it,” Spaysky said.

Spaysky added that the very setting of the sculptures in a gallery alters how viewers perceive the objects, forcing them to rethink the significance of quotidian household objects.

“Most objects, when they’re around in your home, have more sentimental or functional ties to them. When you take them and you put them in a gallery, you read them as a text,” Spaysky said. “A lot of the things can do things, say the door harps that I make—they make sounds and function the same way. But when you read them in a gallery, you think more about what door harps are.”

**BY HAENA CHU | SPECTATOR STAFF WRITER | NOVEMBER 20, 2015, 3:02 AM**