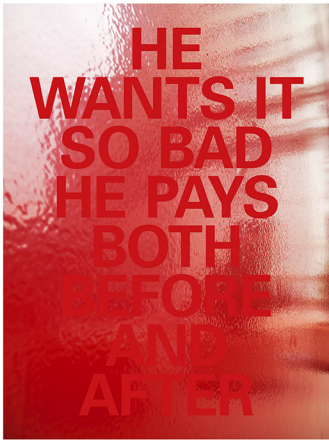


V MAGAZINE



DENNIS ADAMS' IN THE RED OPENS AT KENT FINE ARTS

TEXT EDUARDO ANDRES ALFONSO

DENNIS ADAMS' IN THE RED EXPLORES (AND EXPLOITS) THE INTERSECTIONALITY OF COMMERCIAL IMAGERY AND ART

Dennis Adams' *In The Red*, on view now at Kent Fine Arts, presents a set of 47 compositions that pair a line of text over an image, many of which are signs and advertisements photographed on the street. The strategy is not something unfamiliar to most in fashion; The sans serif font over very seductive images could have found themselves easily in the mix of the most recent Vetements show, which featured quotes like, "May the bridges I burn light the way," attributed to Dylan McKay, the rebellious heartthrob from Beverly Hills 90210. Adams' texts similarly shares this deadpan tone. One print reads "I barely part my lips for the cheap ones," over an image of a discarded money pouch (very possibly a lost Comme de Garçon's wallet). Another print nestled the words, "When I know I'm never coming back I always steal a little something," into a photo of a peeling Diesel ad campaign from Spring/Summer 2015, left to disintegrate on a SoHo street corner. These instances (and many other moments in the show) present a thought on decay. They describe not only the after life of images, who far outlive their intended sales strategies, but also the afterlife of events that are run on cable news for a week and then relegated to the same fate as ad campaigns.

While fashion and its symbiotic relationship with images and writing seem to be projective, *In The Red* comes off mostly as sadistically commemorative. The visual language of the fashion world gets turned upside down to remind people of corporate greed, beloved icons turned sex-offenders, and former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. This juxtaposition creates an allure to recollections of not-so-favorable events, or draws one into puzzling remarks about the Immaculate Conception and desire. Navigating the prints, which are hung salon style in Kent Fine Arts' second floor space, creates links between probably unrelated but possibly related content. This might come across as a surrealist-associative game, but it's not really that highbrow. *In The Red*, through its own condensed form, creates a small reenactment of what most of us, whether in the role of consumers or connoisseurs, are doing all the time: associating images (of which we see many) with absolutely unrelated thoughts about rebellion, sexual prowess, and love. It lays bare that process and presents room-sized version of the associative game we play between images and culture in the world. The game here oftentimes is baffling and feels like it's going above your head, but is more frequently pointed and uncannily personal. The personal moments serve as a reminder that many of the phrases and icons we take stock in are not so much our own, but shared cultural visions waiting to be distilled into image, type, and color.

In The Red is on view now at Kent Fine Arts through May 27