

ARTFORUM

Elias Hansen

LAWRIMORE PROJECT

831 Airport Way South

April 1–May 9

Elias Hansen's work possesses a threatening and pungent pitch. A native of the Northwest and an accomplished glass artist, for the past six years Hansen's gritty, libertarian aesthetic has offered the region a critical antidote to the candy-colored daydreams of the Chihuly School.

Hansen's glass work in this exhibition, titled "We Used to Get So High," is harsh, realistic, and a little nostalgic: crack pipes in the shapes of snow domes and crystals; walls of hand-formed beer mugs shored up with scrap lumber; and "antique" bottles glowing with surreal, folkloric tinctures—one in the exhibition contains "alcohol, lilac, sword fern, bitter cherry bark, Skagit River water, and diesel fuel." Often collaborating with his brother, artist Oscar Tuazon, as well as with a group of skilled distillers, botanists, and survivalists, Hansen creates transformations of the everyday that are deeply informed by his study of the elusive properties of glass.

His working stills, cigar-box dioramas and peepholes, photographic assemblages, and architectural interventions coalesce into a refractive, fermenting heterotopia. Hansen activates this space through spontaneous revelries; a visitor to one of his installations may be met with the offer of some bootleg alcohol or a cob of grilled corn. Hansen attends to the living and the dead; much of the work in "We Used to Get So High" evokes past tragedies—the death and incarceration of loved ones, the demise of individualism, and the hubris of art.



Elias Hansen, *I'm Not Paranoid Because I'm High*, 2009, hand-blown glass, found glass, water, pump, tubing, found objects, wooden table, dimensions variable.

— Stephanie Snyder