

# BLACK & WHITE PROJECT SPACE

483 Driggs Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11211 Tel: 718 599 8775 Fax: 718 599 8798

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Black & White Project Space, Brooklyn, NY announces the inaugural exhibition.



## ALINA & JEFF BLIUMIS

Casual Conversations in Brooklyn

March 7- June 14, 2009

Opening reception:  
Saturday, March 14, 6-9pm

Black & White Project Space is proud to present *Casual Conversations in Brooklyn* – a dynamic site-specific installation by the New York - based multidisciplinary artists Alina & Jeff Bliumis.

Originally from the former Soviet Union, Alina & Jeff Bliumis often reflect on their own experiences and explore the notions of migration, social developments, and cultural engineering with a focus on 'foreignness' and 'otherness' in daily social encounters.

*Casual Conversations in Brooklyn* is an anthropological inquiry into Brooklyn's immigrant communities. Confronted by a radically different reality these new Americans are bound together by pursuing their American dreams and searching for new identities reflective of their new lives. How does one retain cultural roots while creating a new identity? *Casual Conversations in Brooklyn* approaches this and other challenging questions in a two-part site-specific installation occupying both the indoor and outdoor gallery spaces.

*Be Happy* – a new project conceived for Black & White Project Space's unique outdoor space harnesses the gigantic cut-out of a young woman with a 'Be Happy' talk balloon against the artificial grass surface as a metaphor for 'greener pastures,' the search for which entices people to migrate.

The last installment of the ongoing *Casual Conversations in Brooklyn* project for the indoor space consists of a series of artistic interventions, discussions, and actions that have taken place since 2007. It is comprised of sculptural objects, photographs, video and sound work inspired by public dialogues conducted by the artists in the Brighton Beach community of Brooklyn, and new work specially developed during this exhibition. The newly created and existing work will gradually fill up and claim the space over the course of the exhibition inviting the spectator to share the journey, its beginnings, its evolution, and the stories these wandering objects trigger. This unconventional installation attempts to evoke the transformation of immigrant experience from an 'empty nest' to the space defined by new social interactions.

*Let's drink. Let's talk. Free.* performance schedule: March 14<sup>th</sup> / April 10<sup>th</sup> / May 8<sup>th</sup> / 7-9pm.

Alina and Jeff Bliumis' projects have been exhibited at the 1st and 2nd Moscow Biennale of Contemporary Art (Russia), Busan Biennale 2006 (South Korea), Assab One (Italy), Castlefield Gallery (UK). Their video works have been screened at many festivals such as New York Video Festival (USA); Media Art Festival Friesland (Netherlands); Florida Film Festival (USA); Resfest 10; and Videomedaja (Serbia). Their most recent public interactions took place at the Jewish Museum in New York (*American Dream*) and Bat-Yam Museum in Israel (*A Painting for a Family Dinner*). Their work is in various private and public collections, including Moscow Museum of Modern Art, Bat-Yam Museum and the Saatchi collection. *Casual Conversations in Brooklyn* project is supported by the Six Points Fellowship and the Puffin Foundation.

Image: *identity*, Boardwalk, Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, NY, July 7, 2007, Digital c-print

Black & White Project Space is located at 483 Driggs Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11211 Tel: 718 599 8775  
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Hours: Friday, Saturday, Sunday, 12 – 6pm

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