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R & Company Presents

# HAAS BROTHERS *COOL WORLD*

November 4, 2014 - January 10, 2015

**Opening Reception:**  
Tuesday, November 4, 6 – 8pm

New York, NY (September 2014) – R & Company is pleased to announce *Cool World*, the first American solo exhibition of works by the Haas Brothers. The exhibition, featuring new designs, will be on view November 4, 2014 through January 10, 2015.

The concept of freedom provides the nexus for the body of work exhibited in *Cool World*, in particular the ideal of California freedom. As Simon Haas writes, “California has been the catalyst for our development as artists—its alien-ness and variety of culture and landscape have taught us by example that fantasy and reality can be merged by choice. Our newest pieces offer a taste of the Californian utopia that we developed for ourselves.”

The title of the exhibition, *Cool World*, is the Haas Brothers’ nod to the 1992 film directed by Ralph Bakshi. The combination of live-action and animation in the film made it an obsession of theirs as children, as did the highly sexualized content, which meant they were not allowed to see the film when it came out, nor have they to this day. For them, even the simple idea of the film, and the titillation of its having been off limits, palpably evokes the rush that a young teen gets at the thought of getting into an XXX arcade or film. Many of the works in the exhibition capture this thrill, a heady mix of innocence, arousal, curiosity and humor.

The exhibition, an immersive reworking of the gallery space, includes never before seen works from their *Beast* series presented in a dinner party setting at a large-scale table flanked by animalistic lamps, both made in their unique hand-worked hex tiles. Their acclaimed installation *Advocates for the Sexual Outsider*, to date seen only at Design Miami/ Basel, will be on view as will new *Accretion* ceramics, the debut of a series of paintings in handmade frames and *Animal Party*, the print they developed with Flavor Paper for the Wallpaper\* Handmade exhibition. The collection of works selected for the exhibition offers a broad look at the inventiveness, ingenuity and reverence for culture, both high and low, that the Haas studio embodies. Their first publication, *Vol. 1*, co-published by R & Company and Damiani will be available for purchase at the exhibition.



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In never having seen the film *Cool World* itself, the Haas Brothers indulge and prolong their fantasy—in essence, preserving their memory of *Cool World* and choosing to remember it as a success and watershed cultural moment, rather than the flop it actually was, commercially and critically. For them, this represents Los Angeles culture as well, where it seems possible to choose one's own reality by ignoring some and embracing other aspects of life in the city. The fantasy they present in this exhibition is a group of objects driven by, as Simon writes, “the emotionally liberating idea that things are whatever we want them to be.”

### **About the Haas Brothers**

The Haas Brothers, twins Nikolai and Simon (b. 1984 Los Angeles), had a creative upbringing in Austin, Texas where their opera singer mother, actor brother, and sculptor father taught them to play music, write, sing and paint. Starting in their early teens, they studied stone carving under their father, mastering the craft before leaving home. The twins parted ways in 2003 to pursue their artistic goals individually. Simon studied painting at RISD while Nikolai toured as a musician with artists like Vincent Gallo, Sean Lennon and Jim O'Rourke through his early 20s. In 2007, the two reconvened in Los Angeles to tour with the band RRIICCEE, then founded the HAAS BROTHERS there in 2010 when L.A. architect Johnston Marklee offered a chance to collaborate on a friend's project. The brothers received attention right away for their nimble craftsmanship and clever use of materials, and the few years since have seen them evolve from fabricators and collaborators to studio art innovators.

In their current works, the Haas Brothers explore aesthetic and formal themes related to nature, science fiction, sexuality, psychedelia and color theory. Their mastery and unique use of materials ranging from brass, bronze, porcelain and fur to highly technical resins and polyurethane, matched with their insatiable curiosity and remarkable visual intelligence, sets them apart as artists.

The Haas Brothers currently live and work in Los Angeles, California.

<http://www.thehaasbrothers.com>

### **About R & Company**

R & Company is a gallery committed to historic and contemporary design exhibition and education. Founded by Zesty Meyers and Evan Snyderman in 1997, it presents groundbreaking exhibitions and publications of both historic significance and emerging talent. R & Company represents a diverse program of international design from North America, South America, Europe, and Asia, produced between 1945 and today. R & Company has an extensive archive, library, and collection that chronicle the rapid ascent of the design market. In addition to the exhibition program, gallery, and publications, Meyers and Snyderman contribute widely to publications and lecture frequently about design.

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### **IMAGES:**

1 - Haas Brothers, *Accretion Vases*, Photo courtesy Joe Kramm/R & Company

2 - Haas Brothers, *Edward Fur-Long bench from the Beast series*, Photo courtesy Joe Kramm/R & Company

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