

# NEISTAT BROTHERS

# COLLECTOR

*They see beauty in the tattered, not varnished. They find truth that's self-learned, not taught. In a word, they're romantics.*

The Neistat Brothers are a self-taught, filmmaking duo from New York, renowned for their lo-fi, DIY films. Whether playful appropriations of Hollywood films or bizarre homemade science experiments, the Neistat Brothers' films convey a subversive critique of consumerist culture.

The Neistat Brothers first attracted public attention in 2003 with their blatantly critical work, *iPod's Dirty Secret*. After being refused a replacement battery for an 18-month old iPod, Casey and Van Neistat took to the streets of Manhattan on their bikes to sabotage iPod's omnipresent advertising. Using a Sony DigiCam, they filmed their vandalism of the advertisements with a slogan revealing the truth about the faulty product and then circulated this video via their email networks, crashing telecommunications servers across the country as circulation gained momentum. This seminal work, and the many made since then, have been viewed by millions on the Brothers' website and locate them at the pioneer days of today's trans global, mass communication networks of YouTube and MySpace.

Compiled by the artists, *Collector* offers an insightful reading of the Neistat Brothers style and interests. Although slightly more obscure than *iPod's Dirty Secret*, these works oscillate between consumerist torture and flat out gonzo antics typical of the pair. Curious experiments are filmed in a minimalist style, with a clinical white background highlighting the visual properties of everyday household items and their destructive potentials. Music also plays a central role; whether menacing or unexpectedly cheerful, the soundtrack provides an emotional narrative that lulls the audience into viewing some borderline acts.

Viewer's may recoil at the use of animals in some of these works, or dismiss them as mere adolescent inquiry. The Neistat Brothers, however, are quick to point out that their methods echo those employed in everyday domestic scenarios and scientific environments. These unsettling scenes, set against a pristine background and ambient soundtrack, are designed to make us squirm, and question.

Other films in the collection, such as *Mad Max*, *Propane bomb* and *Minibike race* do away with such stylings and unashamedly present the Brothers' juvenile antics - such as reckless motorcycle racing and playing with fire - in the style of the recently popular Jackass. Equally provocative, these works continue the Brothers critique of consumer culture, playing up to the unashamedly indulgent and often ridiculous entertainment propagated by today's television and movie networks and forcing us to question what we, the audience, will choose to endure and consume.

Whether masked as art or openly subscribing to popular cultural trends, the Neistat Brothers' films carry the viewer to an edge of curiosity and repulsion, pleasure and pain, shock and awe, right and wrong. For further viewing of their works, see [www.neistat.com](http://www.neistat.com).

**PICA does not condone cruelty to animals. Nor does it condone censorship of artists.**



## PLAY LIST

1. MOUSETRAP, 2002, 1:52
2. Van's Package, 2006, :37
3. Propane Bomb, 2004, :26
4. Minibike Race, 2006, 1:52
5. Goldfish, 2002 3:07,
7. The Challenge, 2005, 4:16
8. Soldier, 2004 :18
9. Mad Max, 2006, 1:53
10. Wine Glass Time Bomb, 2006, 2:31
11. Atoms for Peace, 2004, 2:44

**The Neistat Brothers**, Van and Casey, were born in 1975 and 1981 respectively and live and work in New York. They have been collaborating on film projects since 2001, participating in festivals such as *Rooftop Films Montreal*, Montreal (2005); *Optica Film Festival*, Spain (2005); *Monitor Film Series*, Tokyo (2003); *Rotterdam Architectural Film Festival*, Rotterdam (2003); and *Rockstar Games Upload Festival*, New York (2002). Casey and Van also participated in the *Sao Paulo Biennial*, Sao Paulo, Brazil (2004) and *Miami Art Basel*, Miami (2003).



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