

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Swarm Gallery is pleased to announce the upcoming exhibition

THERE IS NO END TO MATTER | CASEY JEX SMITH

May 27 - June 17, 2007

Artists debut solo exhibition

RECEPTION | Thursday, May 31, 2007 6-9PM

OAKLAND, Calif. — 2 May 2007- Swarm Gallery is pleased to present Casey Jex Smith's first solo exhibition, *There Is No End To Matter*, presenting a new body of work comprised of works on paper and mixed media sculpture. The artist responds to his interest in the history of religious illustration in the Mormon Church, and the absence of religious content in contemporary art. In this exhibition, he is "attempting to bring the two together, however uncomfortable one may be with the other."

The impetus for this installation is two-fold: 1.) The artist is tired of "Mormon Art" that is illustrative, didactic, manipulative, saccharine, and poorly executed; and 2.) The artist is tired of "Contemporary Art", that is didactic, elitist, text-heavy, political, far-left-leaning, spiritually void, unattractive, pornographic, anti-religion, soul-less, and poorly executed.

"I'm trying to bring these two complaints together, and make something attractive and interesting for the two-sides of me that make up a good share of my identity: Mormon/Artist." Art has always accompanied the artist's church attendance in the form of sketchbook drawings and doodlings during countless hours of church meetings during his formative years. Now that he's combined his faith with his art-making, he's less challenged with having to choose one over the other, a decision many Mormon-artist predecessors make.

Casey Jex Smith received his MFA from San Francisco Art Institute in 2005.

PROJECT SPACE

Feeding Our Souls Through Birds at Lake Merritt | Lydia Nakashima Degarrod

May 12- June 17, 2007

Lydia Nakashima Degarrod, a visual artist and cultural anthropologist, will have a video installation based on observations and interviews with a group of men and women who regularly feed birds at Lake Merritt in Oakland. She has found that for this community of bird feeders, the act of feeding birds becomes an arena in which to inscribe a diverse set of feelings about their relationship to other species, and also about their own lives. For some it is place to express their feelings for their native homeland where physical boundaries between people and animals were almost non-existent. For others, feeding the birds brings them back to the last time they nurtured their now grown children. For others, it's a way of fighting loneliness. For others it is a way of communicating with a form of nature that they see as disappearing. And for others, the flight of the birds represents their own near departure from life. This project which combines both ethnographic research and visual art is being made with the collaboration of the Wildlife Refuge at Lake Merritt led by naturalist Stephanie Benavidez.

Lydia Nakashima Degarrod has conducted several interdisciplinary projects which combined both cultural anthropology and visual art. Currently, Lydia Nakashima Degarrod is working on map project which will be conducted as Artist in Residence at the Center for Art and Public Life at the California College of Arts in 2007-2008.

LOCATION | Swarm Gallery, 560 Second Street, Oakland CA 94607 www.swarmstudios.net

Swarm Gallery is open Tu - Su, 12 - 6 PM and by appointment

PRESS CONTACT AND IMAGES

For further information please contact Svea Lin Vezzone at tel +1 510 472 7930 svea@swarmstudios.net