

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

This is Not a Group Show

Work by University of Washington Faculty in the Division of Art

Jacob Lawrence Gallery

October 24 – November 10, 2007

Opening Reception Tuesday October 23rd, 4 – 6PM

**Interactive performance by graduate students in the UW Dance Department Catherine Cabeen, Kent Lindemer, Louis Gervais and Jamie Hall
5:30PM**

Jacob Lawrence Gallery

School of Art Building

University of Washington Campus

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday: 12 – 4PM

For detailed map: www.washington.edu/home/maps/northcentral.html

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This is Not a Group Show loosely references Rene Magritte's 1928-29 seminal painting "Ceci n'est pas une pipe" -- a work that used text and image to differentiate the object of a pipe from its representation, thereby suggesting that things aren't always what they seem. In a sense the artist was 'blowing smoke.' Indeed, his painting may 'read' as a pipe, but it is not.

The artists featured in this show are bound to one another through their professorial affiliation with the Division of Art at the University of Washington. But their studio practices -- a dizzying array of techniques, styles and approaches to art making -- sets them apart from one another. Their differences are made all the more apparent when observing their work as artists within the University's individual programs. In the division of photography, for example, Rebecca Cummins' explosive images of shattering glass are far removed from Ellen Garvens' meditations on the human body, or Paul Berger's digital composite views. This diversity is a testament to the University's efforts to create well-rounded curricula benefiting from the faculty's wide-ranging expertise. A broad view of the work exhibited initially suggests common themes and relationships: informational systems; the environment; the human body; language, narrative and storytelling; temporality; the relationships of objects within space; interior landscapes; a pure embrace of materials. But although these concepts appear elastic and overlapping, they do not ultimately result in an amalgamate structure.

Denzil Hurley's marks on canvas read as cryptic text. Frustrating attempts at a literal comprehension, their repetition also suggests underlying informational systems such as those explored in the work of Paul Berger, whose images capture and combine the natural and artificial world, and that of Jamie Walker, whose investigations of cellular structures and atmospheric particles result in stylized cloud forms.

Philip Govedare's paintings are an anxious response to the continued transformations of the natural world, in which light and atmospheric conditions indicate site-specific significance. John T. Young's re-constructed sculpture of basalt and stainless steel references the act of healing and recalls more delicate (and

traditionally feminine) acts of sewing or mending, prompting viewers to reconsider the fragility of relationships, bodies, and form in general.

Timea Tihanyi's subjects simultaneously allude to the human body and the natural world we inhabit, suggesting the inextricability of the two. Ellen Garvens' photography and sculptural constructions examine physicality, change and the body's ability to adapt. Her work bears comparison to Lou Cabeen's interactive textile, which invites the viewer to physically bear the weight of the work while using it as a tool -- experiencing it as a portable landscape with which to alter interior and exterior environments.

The work of Zhi Lin, Curt Labitzke, Akio Takamori and Shirley Scheier suggests open-ended narratives. Scheier's compelling titles and barely-there bodies suggest a drama unfolding. Lin wields his brush as a tool for social advancement with large-scale paintings that examine the cultural propensity for cruelty. Labitzke's figures are inspired by mythological hero worship, and Takamori's painted ceramics tell a story of both surface and form.

Doug Jeck's three-dimensional work deftly joins the playtime of youth to unconscious violence. His practice, like that of painter David Brody, relies on memories of childhood and emphasizes the comical, the obscene, and in many ways, the primal urge to create.

Rebecca Cummins' often-interactive public works toy with temporality, optical phenomena, shadow, and light. Hearing and vision collide as glass is captured at the moment of impact via sound-triggered flash. Anne Hayden Stevens collapses time by countering images of Rome with delicate and seemingly transitory fine line drawings over photo collage.

The painting process inspires Helen O'Toole's abstract, pulsating canvases of glowing color and light. In Layne Goldsmith's most recent work, abstract design plays out upon carpets -- an embrace of fine art and functionality. Amie McNeel's work in forged steel and enameled cast iron contrasts the density of the material with the fluidity of motion: Fundamental -- and generally unseen -- dynamics describe ripples of water generated by a stone thrown into the water. Underlying forces are also found in the work of Ann Gale, who uses light and space as conveyors of emotional intensity. Hovering lightly between cohesion and disintegration, her portraits seem to float weightlessly, fixed momentarily in place by the gaze of the viewer.

Group shows often imply compromise by inviting an evaluation of work from a unilateral perspective. Although the process of grouping disparate works can both enlighten and unify by underscoring the connections between works thought to be diametrically opposed to one another -- in many cases shedding light on developing tendencies and helping to foster new ways of seeing, hearing, being -- group shows also risk reinforcing set ways of thinking about the works on display. Such limitations can be as unfair to viewers as they are to artists.

As Magritte was well aware, language is incommensurable with seeing. Art writing aims, perhaps in vain, to approximate the experience of seeing. Whereas writing is laden with acts of division -- each mark of punctuation or paragraph in a text creating a visual distance that neatly compartmentalizes thoughts and facilitates reader comprehension -- visual art is often more expansive than the words that try to contain it.

Works may appear contained, but their ideas radiate well beyond them. Because of this, connections between individual works will inevitably be made within the context of a group show. Yet, exhibited together here, they reveal no small amount of self-sufficiency as they navigate terrains of their own devising and cultivate the stuff of which the most memorable solo shows are made.

Curator
Suzanne Beal