

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Word-Less

June 3 - July 23, 2010

Opening Reception: Wednesday, June 2, 6-8 pm

Artists: Michael Paul Britto, Brendan Fernandes, Duron Jackson, Fabienne Lasserre, Jason Lujan, Rashaad Newsome, Min Oh, Roxana Perez-Mendez and Carolyn Salas.

Curator: Felicity Hogan

EFA Project Space

323 West 39th Street, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10018
between 8th and 9th Avenues

Gallery Hours: Wed through Sat, 12-6 PM
July Hours: Wed through Fri, 12-6 PM

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Opening June 2nd at **EFA Project Space**, *Word-Less* presents work that purposefully denies established forms of communication.. Through performance, photography, video, sculpture, and installation, the artists in the exhibition seek alternative ways to articulate their narratives. With its deliberate disconnect, the title of the show emphasizes and plays on ideas of misinterpretation, and redefinition. The artists propose modes of abstract communication, both commenting on and circumventing the failures of hierarchical structure in language.



Some of these artists focus on veiling or abstracting symbols and text used to relay meaning. **Carolyn Salas** presents a series of cast memorial plaques that contain no inscription, and a sculpture series of busts without faces, declaring anonymous successes and questioning the traditional modes of honoring the individual. Fabienne Lasserre's *Worldless* and *Inarticulates* are abstract forms used to express the potential of the excluded and the innate power that exists in the margins of society. While Salas and Lasserre employ formal aesthetics to examine

communication and participation, **Min Oh** utilizes a logistical structure to generate her interactive performance *A Dialog*. In her work, the experience of naturally occurring dialog becomes abstracted to a diagram and the logic of exchange becomes open to interpretation.



Responding more directly to questions of identity, cultural assimilation, and race, **Brendan Fernandes** hired an acting coach to teach him how to speak in the accents of his own cultural heritage for his video *Foe*.

Using his learned inflections, he recites an excerpt from the book *Foe*, J.M Coetzee's sequel to Robinson Crusoe.

Rashaad Newsome's *Shade*

Compositions uses the female subject to

deconstruct and reinvent stereotyped expression. Video documentary of a performance in New York shows black women perform an *a capella* composition of dismissive "ghetto" gestures, choreographed by the artist in collaboration with the performers. Also commenting on the correlation between gesture and preconceptions of race, **Michael Paul Britto's** video *Cool-Pose #1* projects cast shadows (a metaphor for blackness) as life-sized silhouettes enacting body movements associated with "gangsta-hip" behavior. In her silent video *Siempre Hace Frio*, **Roxana Perez Mendez** comments on the emotional effect immigration has on the women by morphing three stereotypical identities of women's attire on a single figure.

In both **Duron Jackson** and **Jason Lujan's** works, there is a reinvention of symbols to infer pre-existing histories. Jackson's abstracted aerial studies of correctional facilities reference Quilts of Gee's Bend, "Rooftop Variations" and Robert Smithson's "Non-site" through their abstraction of aerial studies of prisons. In these images, these places can become any place as well as no place at all. In *Apache MaK* **Jason Lujan** forges a new narrative that skirts the lines of history, fiction, and the differentiation of cultural identity. The artist creates hand-made scale models inspired by two referents: the work of a Japanese science fiction artist, and the symbols of the Apache Native Americans: melding real references to one culture with the fictional universe born out of an entirely different heritage.

Image Credits: (Top) Carolyn Salas, *The Awarded* (2010), Cast resin, Image courtesy of the artist.

(Bottom): Rashaad Newsome, *Shade Compositions* (2007), From the 11th Annual Art Under the Bridge Festival in Dumbo, Brooklyn, Image courtesy of the artist.

The exhibition will be accompanied by an illustrated curatorial essay. A number of public programs will be presented throughout the run of the exhibition, including a performance by Roxana Perez Mendez. Dates and details of these programs will be announced shortly. For more information on the exhibition, press materials, or public programs, please email Michelle Levy at michelle@efanyc.org, or call 212-563-5855

Curator's Bio

Felicity Hogan is a British artist and curator based in New York. She is currently Executive Director of Artists Alliance Inc, a non-profit organization that runs both a residency program and an exhibition space, Cuchifritos, in the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Ms. Hogan is also manager of New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) Doctor's Hours, a consultation program for artists.

Recent curatorial projects include "Structured Simplicity," at Dumbo Arts Center, Brooklyn, NY; "All is one, one is all" at the Free Store, NY, organized by Double A Projects; and the final exhibition of Juana Valdes, Workspace Resident at Jamaica Center for Arts and Learning, Jamaica, Queens. Her essay for the artist monograph "Talk to the Hand," on Hermelinde Hergenbahn (translated into German) was published by the Künstlerhaus Schloss Balmoral, Germany in 2008.

EFA Project Space is a Program of **The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts**.

EFA Project Space, a multi-disciplinary contemporary art venue focused on the investigation of the creative process, aims to provide dynamic exchanges between artists, cultural workers, and the public. Art is directly connected to its producers, to the communities they are a part of, and to every day life. By contextualizing and revealing these connections, we strive to bridge gaps in our cultural community, forging new partnerships and the expansion of ideas. Through these synergies, artists build on their creative power to further impact society. www.efanyc.org

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