

**SculptureCenter**  
**44-19 Purves Street**  
**Long Island City, New York 11101**  
**t 718.361.1750**  
**f 718.786.9336**  
**info@sculpture-center.org**  
**www.sculpture-center.org**

## For Immediate Release

Release Date:  
January 8, 2008

Exhibition:  
***New In Practice Projects***

Exhibition Dates:  
**January 13–March 30, 2008**

Opening Reception:  
**Sunday, January 13, 4-6pm**

Gallery Hours:  
Thursday – Monday, 11am-6pm

Admission:  
\$5 suggested donation

Media Contact:  
Katie Farrell  
t 718.361.1750 x111  
f 718.786.9336  
kfarrell@sculpture-center.org

## NEW IN PRACTICE PROJECTS, WINTER 2008

FORDE & THE ASHBIRDS (AURELIÉN GAMBONI, BENJAMIN LAVIGNE, DAMIEN NAVARRO, VANESSA SAFAVI, KONSTANTIN SGOURIDIS, AND KIM SEOB BONINSEgni), DREW HEITZLER, ALIX LAMBERT, HALEY MELLIN, LEYDEN RODRIGUEZ-CASANOVA, ERIK SMITH, AGATHE SNOW

**New York** – SculptureCenter is proud to present new works by **Forde & the Ashbirds (Aurelién Gamboni, Benjamin Lavigne, Damien Navarro, Vanessa Safavi, Konstantin Sgouridis, and Kim Seob Boninsegni), Drew Heitzler, Alix Lambert, Haley Mellin, Leyden Rodriguez-Casanova, Erik Smith, and Agathe Snow** in the eleventh installment of *In Practice*. These works are commissioned through SculptureCenter's *In Practice* series, which supports the creation and presentation of innovative work by emerging artists. The projects are selected individually and reflect the diversity of approaches to contemporary sculpture. The exhibition will be on view **January 13–March 30, 2008** with an opening reception on **Sunday, January 13, 4-6pm**.

### **Forde & the Ashbirds (Aurelién Gamboni, Benjamin Lavigne, Damien Navarro, Vanessa Safavi, Konstantin Sgouridis, and Kim Seob Boninsegni)**

Forde functions as an independent, non-profit gallery of the same name in Geneva. For this particular project, *Forgetmenot (If It's a Bird Shoot It!)*, conceived in early 2007, the members have chosen to organize themselves as a collective. The project starts with the transportation of a pentagon-shaped box from Switzerland to New York. The five sides symbolize the cooperation of the five participating artists, formalizing what Forde defines as a "relational shape." The pentagon acts as a crate, housing a series of sculptures. The configuration of these elements creates a visual palindrome, so that piece appears identical from multiple vantage points. This design echoes the longer journey the structure is destined for, as it will travel back to its origin. The artists relate this transit to a historical, cultural, and political itinerary between Europe and the United States. Adornments lend esoteric overtones to the display system, fusing the formal and the symbolic. Kim Seob Boninsegni will contribute published material.

### **Drew Heitzler**

For his exhibition at SculptureCenter, Drew Heitzler presents a new film: *Night Tide (for Sailors, Mermaids, Mystics)*. Produced in 1961, *Night Tide* was written and directed by Curtis Harrington. The film stars Dennis Hopper as a sailor on leave in Venice, California who falls in love with a mermaid sideshow performer. A strange film noir, *Night Tide* slips into camp and then back again. The film conveys a dark depiction of Los Angeles that mirrors the darkness of the narrative that unfolds. In *Night Tide (for Sailors, Mermaids, Mystics)*, the artist re-edits the original film, removing all dialogue with the exception of the carnival caller's description of Mora the Mermaid. In addition, the story has been altered drastically in order to convert the story line of the original into a surrealist dreamscape of double vision, love-loss, and nightmarish confusion.

### **Alix Lambert**

Alix Lambert presents images from her new book *The Silencing*, published by Perceval Press (2008). The publication introduces a selection of photographs from six locations in Russia where journalists, some friends of the artist, were murdered over the past few years. The photographs capture Lambert's expertise as a journalist and researcher, but also as an artist and a filmmaker. The depictions connote establishing shots or the photography for a film, while demonstrating the ability of spatial representation to contain critical commentary and a sense of loss and absence. Lambert is well known for *The Marriage Project* (1992-1993) where she wed and divorced three men and one woman in the span of six months, and her highly inspirational film *The Mark of Cain* (1999-2000), a first-hand documentary on tattoo practices in Russian prisons.

### **Haley Mellin**

Haley Mellin presents a new installation titled *Totems*. Mellin considers painting a readymade of pre-manufactured materials and presents paintings as quasi installations. References are drawn from totems of modernity, information culture, and political-economic abstractions; no single concept guarantees the relationship of these elements, and no spectator is imagined to provide a definitive interpretation. Mellin uses assemblage as a means to engage with painting, both elevating the aura of the mechanized copy and demoting the autonomy of the artist's gesture. Her method allows a rendering of the generic and a trapping of the iconic. Mellin's combined paintings become an act of publishing, editing, observing, and reading.

### **Leyden Rodriguez-Casanova**

Leyden Rodriguez-Casanova's work borrows from domestic, decorative, and architectural elements found around the suburbs of the United States. The displacement of these manufactured elements into new contexts give a different connotation to each piece, lending a strangely gothic appearance at times. For one of SculptureCenter's cellar spaces, Rodriguez-Casanova devises *Two Gates Externally Locked*, 2007-8, a series of gates that must be unlocked by the visitor within the long narrow corridor of the space. To access and cross through the corridor, visitors need a key, found at the front desk. The piece ponders what might constitute the inside versus the outside of a physical place, a physiological mindset, or a social group.

### **Erik Smith**

Erik Smith's interest in cultural beliefs, mysticism, and otherworldly dimensions brought him to present *The Ghost of James Lee Byars Calling* at the Kapinos Galerie, Berlin, and at De Appel Center for Contemporary art, Amsterdam in 2006. The piece fused two systems of cultural thought and meaning: the specific elements of Byars' work and Black Metal music.

In *Who, Among You, Deserves Eternal Life?*, 2008 Smith deposits two crashed cars, one white, one black, in SculptureCenter's courtyard. The title of the piece originates from a phrase in Michel Houellebecq's, *The Possibility of an Island* (2005), which depicts the effects of a technology on humanity that makes eternal life possible for some, but not for all.

*Who, Among You, Deserves Eternal Life?* explores the space between acute trauma and timeless transcendence with direct references to art history and fiction, from Andy Warhol, to Jean Luc Godard, J.G. Ballard, and David Cronenberg. Within Smith's sets of references, the two cars that have collided at some point in the real world nod to an abstract cosmic order. Smith points out, "it also reformulates the harmonized relationship of black and white, the colors of the Yin-Yang symbol itself, as a collision of literally fatal proportions."

### **Agathe Snow**

Agathe Snow's installations connote interior realities and outside fictions. For SculptureCenter, Snow reacts to an article in reference to her friends and peers that uses words and terms she could have used or developed. Snow uses every material described or mentioned in the article, creating a land-fill of systematized paraphernalia. The piece acts as both a homage and a riposte to bad poetry, the press, and the idea of pin-pointing a generation — ideas that fill the artist both with venom and glee. *The Asshole of NYC (An Attempt in Conversation)*, 2008, is a tableau of a zeitgeist, a scene, and a period.

*Thanks*

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*About SculptureCenter*

Founded by artists in 1928, SculptureCenter is a not-for-profit arts institution dedicated to experimental and innovative developments in contemporary sculpture. SculptureCenter commissions new work and presents exhibits by emerging and established, national and international artists. In 2001, SculptureCenter purchased a former trolley repair shop in Long Island City, Queens. This facility, designed by artist/designer Maya Lin, includes 6,000 square feet of interior exhibition space, offices, and outdoor exhibition space.

For additional information or photographs, please contact Katie Farrell at  
718 361 1750 x111 or [kfarrell@sculpture-center.org](mailto:kfarrell@sculpture-center.org).

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