

## JASON MEADOWS

### *Frame Narrative*

May 10- June 16, 2007

Opening reception: Thursday, May 10, 6-8pm

### Gallery one

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery is very pleased to present *Frame Narrative*, the gallery's fourth solo exhibition with Jason Meadows. Continuing his compelling investigation of figuration, narrative, form, and material, Meadows takes Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, and Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* as points of departure, reconfiguring in three dimensions the rich tradition of imagery that the characters from each of these stories provide, to create engaging sculptures that hover at the border of abstraction and representation.

Exploring the potential of visual storytelling, Meadows borrows the literary term "frame narrative," defined as the setting of one story within another, to present multiple simultaneous narratives in each of these pieces. In translating unmistakable figures; the monster, from *Frankenstein*, or the White Rabbit from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, from the two dimensional to the three dimensional, Meadows launches these characters from the page, referencing not only their original representation, but also and perhaps more importantly, their images as they appear on the pages of magazines, T.V. screens, and in the promotion of commercial products, the context in which they have become cultural icons. Meadows cuts-up, copies, repeats, and complicates these images, filtering our conception of the familiar through a lens of spatial complexity. Riffing on their source material, each work is part of a narrative, but one that is not necessarily linear or complete; they are elegantly animated excerpts, full of a multiplicity of meaning, avoiding rigid designation, or a firm place in an overall plot line.

This interplay between the recognizable and the un-placeable, and the layering of cultural iconography is developed formally in *Frame Narrative* as well. Meadows juxtaposes a rough edged, hand-made production quality, often by using found materials; an old banister, or metal grate, with glossy, commercial colors, creating assemblages that straddle the worlds of abstraction and figuration. The use of found materials is particularly relevant in the depictions of *Frankenstein*, as in "Big Frank" or "Monster Marquee," due to the piecemeal fashioning of Shelley's character, who was likewise constructed from remains. Addressing issues of creativity, Meadows, like the monster's creator, imbues discarded material with new life. "Graverobber," comprised of coffins that form a doorway or portal in the gallery, also refers to the possibility of creation from decay, and unifies the two distinct narrative threads that permeate the show, creating a figurative rabbit hole that can be used to enter the surreal universe of the exhibition.

The unification of form and content present in "Graverobber" exists equally in all of the sculptures that comprise *Frame Narrative*. Each of these pieces is both literally and figuratively a frame for the others, they can all be looked around or through to position and interpret the other works, and together, they form a cinematic tableau of narrative meaning that is layered and non-linear. The cinematic nature of the presentation is particularly present in the "White Rabbit" sculpture, a stereoscopic view of the white rabbit from Carroll's story, gliding across a plane. The repetition of the figure implies a rapidity of movement associated with film rather than sculpture. Works on canvas, which hang on the borders of the gallery, form a backdrop to this action. Each of these pieces enliven the space and communicate with one another—while they cannot be placed on the same narrative trajectory and avoid literal interpretation they seem to all be part of the same performance, or residents of the same "through the looking glass" world.

Living and working in Los Angeles, Meadows's recent exhibitions include, *Red Eye: Los Angeles Artists from the Rubell Family Collection*, Rubell Family Collection, Miami 2006, (group); *The View from here: Acquisitions Since 2000*, Tate Modern, London, 2006 (group); *Sculptures D'Appartement*, Musée Départemental d'art Contemporain, Rochechouart,

France 2005, (group); *Monuments for the USA*, CCA Wattis Institute for the Arts, San Francisco, 2005 (group); among others.

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