

contemporaryartsmuseum houston

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The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is pleased to present a site-specific installation by artist Jason Villegas

Perspectives 167: Jason Villegas
Opening reception: Thursday, August 13, 2009, 6:30-9:00 p.m.
Jason Villegas to speak at 6:30 p.m.

On view: August 14-November 1, 2009



Jason Villegas, *Self Portrait as Garan Brand* (detail), 2009. Courtesy the artist

Houston, TX—Jason Villegas's installations combine wall murals, video, soft sculpture, and performance. For *Perspectives 167: Jason Villegas*, the artist debuts a new site-specific installation created for the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston to mark his first solo museum exhibition. The installation, *Invasive Species*, is an extension of Villegas's ongoing narrative regarding the lifecycle of luxury goods and the ecology they create, from the factories that produce them to the beneficiaries of American aid in the form of exported bulk clothing goods. In creating his installations, Villegas forages thrift stores to recover castoff luxury items such as the once prized logo polo shirts. From this found clothing, the artist constructs self-portraits, soft sculpture, and even totems to unveil the fervent underpinning of the mass consumption of these goods and the status that they once promised.

For *Invasive Species*, Villegas creates an elegant, but campy epic narrative against the epidemic of consumption. The need for status—even among the most economically

disenfranchised who often mimic wealth with fake designer goods and other faux luxury items—is also evoked in his narrative as a world turned upside down. In his videos like *Saleslot* (2009) and *Hare Salesman* (2007), Villegas's animal logos, such as the Lacoste alligator, become gods and wreak havoc on the world as salesmen who peddle goods that both battle and aid the onslaught of aliens that spew a pandemic of consumption. Through his videos, some of which will be shown in the gallery and the others in a collaborative program with Domy Books, the artist provides a window into his evolving mythology on consumption and its sheer absurdity in the face of local, national, and even global economic crisis.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Jason Villegas was born in Houston, TX in 1977, and lives in Brooklyn, NY. He received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from the University of Houston and a Master of Fine Arts from The George Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University in 2007. Villegas's work has been featured in several group exhibitions including the traveling exhibition *Phantom Sightings*, organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2008); *Young Latino Artists #10*, Mexic-Arte Museum, Austin, TX (2005); *Artadia@Diverseworks*, DiverseWorks (2005), Houston, TX; and *The Big Show*, Lawndale Art Center, Houston, TX (2003). Solo exhibitions include projects at Commerce Street Art Warehouse, Houston, TX; Plush Gallery, Dallas, TX; Okay Mountain Gallery, Austin, TX; and Receiver Gallery, San Francisco, CA.

Jason Villegas: Botched Simulacrum will be on view at McClain Gallery, Houston, TX, August 20–September 19, 2009.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

All the following events are free and open to the public, and take place at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston unless otherwise noted. Please check www.camh.org for additional programming and information.

Opening reception: *Perspectives 167: Jason Villegas*

Thursday, August 13, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

6:30 PM: Gallery walkthrough with artist Jason Villegas

7:00-9:00 PM: Opening reception

Screening: *Shorts by Jason Villegas and Matango**

Friday, September 18, 8:30 p.m.

*Special location: Domy Books, 1709 Westheimer, Houston, 713-523-3669

www.domystore.com

In collaboration with Domy Books, Curator Valerie Cassel Oliver will introduce video shorts by Jason Villegas. And stay after to view *Matango*. Washed ashore after their sea vessel is damaged in a powerful storm, a small group waits out the repairs on the island. Hungry and weakened, they feast on mushrooms found in their temporary dwelling; unfortunately, the fungi turn out to be not only poisonous, but also eerily transformative, turning some of the castaways into flesh-eating fiends. 1963, 90 min., free admission

Perspectives Talk: Christine Jelson West

Thursday, September 24, 6:30 p.m.

Join us for a discussion of *Perspectives 167: Jason Villegas* with Christine Jelson West, executive director, Lawndale Art Center, Houston, TX.

Perspectives Talk: Valerie Cassel Oliver

Thursday, October 29, 6:30 p.m.

Valerie Cassel Oliver, curator at CAMH and curator of *Perspectives 167: Jason Villegas*, discusses the exhibition.

PUBLICATION

Perspectives 167: Jason Villegas will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue.

Perspectives catalogues are made possible by a grant from The Brown Foundation, Inc.

EXHIBITION FUNDING AND SUPPORT

The *Perspectives* Series is made possible by major grants from Faye Sarofim; The Studio, the young professionals group of the Contemporary Museum Houston; and by donors to the Museum's *Perspectives* Fund: Anonymous Fund at the Community Foundation of Abilene; Bright Star Productions Inc.; Susie and Sanford Criner; Heidi and David Gerger; Leslie and Mark Hull; Karol Kreymer and Robert J. Card, M.D.; Kerry Inman and Denby Auble; Belinda Phelps and Randy Howard; Leslie and Shannon Sasser in Honor of Lynn Herbert; Sara Dodd-Spickelmier and Keith Spickelmier; and William F. Stern.

EDUCATION SUPPORT

The Museum receives support for its education programs from: M.D. Anderson Foundation; Baker Botts L.L.P.; Baker Hughes Foundation; Chevron U.S.A. Inc.; Louise D. Jamail; Marian and Speros Martel Foundation Endowment; Nordstrom, Inc.

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GENERAL SUPPORT

The Museum's operations and programs are made possible through the generosity of the Museum's trustees, patrons, members and donors. The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston receives partial operating support from the Houston Endowment, Inc., the City of Houston through the Houston Museum District Association, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

Continental is the official airline of the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston.

CAMH MISSION

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is an idea and a place shaped by the present moment. The Museum exemplifies the dynamic relationship between contemporary art and contemporary society through its exhibitions, public and educational programs, and publications. The CAMH provides the physical and intellectual framework essential to the presentation, interpretation, and advancement of contemporary art; it is a vibrant forum for artists and all audiences, and for critical, scholarly, and public discourse.

ALWAYS FRESH, ALWAYS FREE!

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is located at 5216 Montrose Boulevard, at the corner of Montrose and Bissonnet, in the heart of Houston's Museum District. Hours are Tuesday to Saturday, 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Thursdays to 9:00 PM, and Sundays noon to 5:00 PM. Admission is always free. For more information, visit www.camh.org or call (713) 284-8250. ###