

PATRICIA SWEETOW GALLERY

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Ross Smith



Burstein

PATRICIA SWEETOW GALLERY is pleased to present Bay Area artists **Jonathan Burstein**, *Visage*, drawings with collage; and **Bayeté Ross Smith**, *Pomp & Circumstance: First Time to be Adults*, digital c-prints. Exhibition dates are September 4 through October 11, 2008. The artists' reception is Thursday, September 4, from 5:30 - 8:00 pm.

In **Jonathan Burstein's** 2006 one-person exhibition, the gallery presented large scale collage self portraits whose postures suggest the act of pondering self-creation. Burstein applies collage techniques to create mixed-media portraits that propose a new definition of painting, while staying true to his self-imposed constraints of using art print media "to recreate the artist". In the current exhibition, *Visage*, he shifts his focus from self-representation to representing others, specifically ten 30 x 22 inch portraits of security guards working at the deYoung Museum, along with five large scale portraits of artists in his community.

Burstein used his residency at the deYoung Museum in San Francisco to focus on the security guards, whose unsung labor keeps San Francisco's iconic de Young Museum running. Their portraits, composed of images of the very collection they are entrusted to protect, commemorate their essential role in the city's art economy. From the community of artists, he assembles representations of working artists from the aesthetic output of their predecessors and contemporaries: "I think of the process as a form of aesthetic recycling, in which representations of art are broken down into their constituent parts, and then reconstituted into representations of an artist." This technique makes his subjects' artistic influences both literally and visually evident.

Jonathan Burstein received his MFA from San Francisco Art Institute in 2005, and a BA from the University of California, Berkeley. Recent residencies include the deYoung Museum, San Francisco, and the Djerrasi Foundation, where he received the Phyllis Wattis Foundation Fellowship. His work has been included in Bay Area group shows including Southern Exposure's Monster Drawing Rally, and the Garage Biennial.

PSG is pleased to debut **Bayeté Ross Smith** in his one-person exhibition, *Pomp & Circumstance: First Time to be Adults*. Trained in photographic and documentary methods, Ross Smith turns his lens on a unique American phenomenon, the High School Prom. The Black Tie event eclipses social, ethnic, and economic strata to become the preeminent rite of passage from adolescence to adulthood. On view will be twenty 24 x 20 inch digital c-prints.

Taking his cue from the traditional Prom Photograph, Bayeté gives students from Berkeley, Oakland, Piedmont, and San Francisco the opportunity for extemporaneous posing as a commemorative marker. The photographs depict a vast array of budding identities — from the

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serious to playful flamboyance. Though his subjects present idealized versions of themselves, their conflict between youthful innocence and worldliness become apparent.

Ross Smith received his MFA from California College of the Arts in 2004, and his BS in Photography and Graphic Arts from Florida A&M University. He has been awarded residencies at Can Serrat International Art Center, Barcelona, Spain; McColl Center for Visual Art, Charlotte, North Carolina; Kala Art Institute, California; and Southern Exposure's Mission Voices program. His work has been exhibited at Zacheta National Gallery, Poland, and Goethe Institute, Ghana; and the San Francisco Arts Commission at City Hall, with an upcoming exhibition at RUSH Arts Gallery, NY.

Please visit our website at: www.patriciasweetowgallery.com

For further information and press materials

please contact the gallery at 415-788-5126.

Gallery hours: Tuesday through Saturday 10:30 - 5:30 pm

Email: info@patriciasweetowgallery.com