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www.amrichardfineart.com • tel: (917) 570-1476 • gallery@amrichardfineart.com

For immediate release.

Soon We Will Grow Wings...

Works of Art by Jude Hughes

....And Then The Sky Was Divided.

Works on Paper by Katie Klencheski

September 5th – October 5th, 2008

Opening Reception: Friday, September 5th from 6-9 pm

Please note: **Artist talks** are scheduled to coincide with the Williamsburg Art Gallery Association 2nd Friday event: Friday September 12th. Katie Klencheski will introduce her work at 7pm followed by Jude Hughes at 8pm.

A.M. Richard Fine Art is pleased to announce an exhibition of works of art by **Jude Hughes** (sculpture) and **Katie Klencheski** (works on paper).

...Soon We Will Grow Wings –a title borrowed from Henry Miller's Order and Chaos (1966)-brings together three intricately conceived automated sculptures by Jude Hughes. Taken individually or seen as a cohesive group, each work addresses issues of history, migratory movements, trade, memory and material resources.

The three sculptures presented are multi-layered. Each is tied to the iconography of design structure and to the idea of the divide between secular and ecclesiastical worship. Additionally, the works address concepts of travel: travel as it is experienced in a daily work-related routine, and as a conduit to inner escapism as induced by recreational drugs. Each are reminders of a civilization past and the present evolving "home" i.e. the artist's geographical habitat, Greenpoint, Brooklyn. The primary materials used by the artist in carving, casting and construction are significant for they were not randomly picked, harvested or recycled. The materials were collected almost ritually, during routine migratory routes. They were specifically chosen for their link to history culled from the artist's family as well as that of his neighborhood, its inhabitants, traditions, commerce and culture.

The mechanical nature of the Hughes pieces require participation. Once activation is triggered, the viewer engages in questioning form, function and symbolism of the work and its various components. The perceived ordinary is morphed into the actual remarkable.

Mr. Hughes's works are of exquisite craftsmanship and whimsy; each invite profound contemplation and offer subtle beauty.

The work entitled **Reliquary for Matthew Benedict**, is a coin operated arm-shaped feretory housing a radius bone relic purported to be that of painter Ralph Blakelock (1847-1919). The idea for the reliquary stemmed from a conversation between the artists Hughes and Benedict. Mr. Benedict, fascinated by Blakelock, recalled to Mr. Hughes, has having had, one late night, a vision of the late artist in his studio. Never one to let a delicious anecdote slip his mind, Mr. Hughes decided to build a reliquary for Mr. Benedict. The base of the shrine encloses a lone *datura* seedpod -a familiar sight on the Brooklyn waterfront- which vessels hallucinogenic and poisonous properties. When fed coins, the pod is electrically illuminated. The mechanics of the sculpture dispenses single seed pill that gently fall into a cut-work silver communion cup. Should Mr. Benedict have the urgency to be visited by Blakelock again, he could simply turn to the reliquary, place a coin in its slot, watch it light, sip a *datura* seed infusion and wait for the apparition. Simply put, this piece is a tribute to Blakelock, a memorial to the interest that Mr. Benedict confers on the late artist, and a legacy to the friendship shared by the two artists (Hughes/Benedict).

The Brooklyn Wunderkammer, is an elaborately crafted cabinet loosely inspired by the form of a New England Chippendale highboy. The interior is conceived like a library bookcase and inspired by medal or gem specimen cabinets. Cupboard doors open to reveal rows of framed plates of castings from a diversity of small animal foot prints; pigeon, starling, sparrow, possum. The foot tracks of urban wildlife were cast from evidence found on Brooklyn pavement. On his routine route to and back from work, staring at the ground, the artist gained a wider awareness of his surroundings. Soon *We Will All Grow Wings*, a sentence appropriated from Henry Miller's Order and Chaos, is carved on the cupboard doors. These words (taken out-of-context) evocative of escapism, immediately resounded with the artist. The coincidences were too numerous to ignore: Miller was from Williamsburg-reading this specific sentence seemed akin to finding the small animal footprints. The artist's process of collecting urban fossils is his attempt to capture the unheeded and transform it into objects of reverence. The daily walk could too be a source of wonderment.

The **Bodega Oratory** is based on Brazilian sources located in Ouro Prêto, a town visited by the artist. The overall form of this work is that of a tall open front cabinet flanked by fanciful columns crowned by coarsely carved capitals. The elements of style and construction of this cabinet are consciously diluted from examples of higher substance. The legs were once part of 1950s revivalist piece of furniture, the capitals were rescued from a construction dumpster. The overall exterior is cheaply gilded. The dullness of the surface treatment is a reminder of a common trade practice. To offer at affordable cost a perceived elitist look to the consuming masses. The interior of the cabinet, meant to be no less precious, is covered in layers of hued lapis lazuli pigment. Inside, a cruxiform oratory hangs on a hook. The oratory is painted cartoon style with a bow-tied duckling. This image is an actual portrait of a coin-operated kiddie ride stationed outside a bodega. Fitted in the arms of the oratory are pills filled with desiccated diet coke and pork rinds. Hanging beneath is a series of mock apothecary jars containing coconut water and Sanka brand instant coffee. Food and beverage consumed by the artist on his way to work. Akin to fun fair arcade games and bodega marquees, the oratory is framed by a multitude of small colored electric bulbs. The lights start flashing when the cabinet's security motion detector is activated. To the artist, this cabinet is a keeper of common urban relics. Memories from daily consumption routes are captured, re-packaged and given a new life. Once removed from the cabinet, the oratory neatly folds into a small box, perhaps for the ease of a pilgrim's travel. A third puzzle, a third painting and a third object of worship- the oratory is a portable capsule of security.

Jude Hughes is an artist, sailor and self-taught engineer. He lives and works in Brooklyn.

The title of Katie Klencheski's most recent collection of drawings **...And Then The Sky Was Divided**, is a biblical verse borrowed from revelation 6:14. This passage describes the moment before the apocalypse. Ms. Klencheski's iconography encompasses an interesting vocabulary of contemporary subject matter staged in prophetic landscapes.

Examples of modern architecture, such as Frank Gehry's acclaimed Walt Disney concert hall, as seen in Untitled 4, is consumed in flames. The placement of Buckminster Fuller's *experimental prototype community of tomorrow* or Epcot center's iconic spaceship earth –another Disney concept-depicted in Untitled 3, is also significant. In this composition, the foreground illustrates a burning news media truck-the artist specifying the vehicle's sensationalist association by having it bear the logo of the Fox television channel. In a post 9/11 world, destinations of mass appeal are forsaken in barren landscapes. There is no improved happier and progressive future. Clouds, depicted in every of Ms. Klencheski's compositions, are shown forming the inevitable cataclysmic storm.

Diminutive figures of mannerist elegance, modeled on Basketball athletes in motion, are another mark of the artist. Once earthly symbols of power, skill, strength and control, the sports-heroes are propelled through the unsettling sky (Untitled 1 and What We Leave Behind). Stripped of their original context, the Klencheski bodies either ascend in rapture or helplessly float in the oppressive vise of cloud-scapes.

Adding to this dark perspective is Ms. Klencheski's choice of material: graphite on paper or wood. Black and white, and what lies between the extreme tonalities, are utilized to shade this peculiarly isolated world placed in a decisively Romantic aesthetic. Obsessively worked, pressed, rubbed and quasi molded on the paper matrix or wood surface, the chiaroscuro effect offered by the graphite becomes yet another subject rather than a complement to the artist's detailed compositions.

This is Ms. Klencheski's first exhibition at the A.M. Richard gallery. Katie Klencheski is an artist native of Boston who now lives in Brooklyn.



J. Hughes, Portable Bodega Oratory (detail)
Box construction shown here unfolded.
copper, wood, pork rinds, evaporated diet coke,
gilding, shellac paint, 10 1/8" x 10 3/4", 2006-08.



K. Klencheski, Untitled III
Graphite on paper, 36" x 24", 2008.

Please join us for the artist's reception on Friday, September 5th, from 6-9pm.

The gallery is open weekdays by appointment and Friday through Sunday, 1-6 pm
For further information, please contact the gallery at: (917) 570-1476 or
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