

For Immediate Release

Luis Romero: *Nameless and Reverberating*

Exhibition Dates: February 25 - March 27, 2010

Opening Reception: Thursday, February 25th from 6-8pm

Fleisher/Ollman is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new drawings, collages and constructions by Chicago artist, Luis Romero.

Romero's flat works, mostly graphite and pen on paper, betray an interest in visual contradiction. Empty surfaces give way to false depth and concentrated lines appear to form tangible shapes. While demonstrating Romero's awareness to Op Art and modernist formalism, these drawings are equally grounded in a personal mark-making practice.

The marks that Romero uses to make patterns and forms can also serve to obscure the supports and contents they cover. When applied to three-dimensional objects, as the artist has done for several years, marks appear to flatten the object they cover while they themselves appear more physical. In other works, Romero extrapolates the mark-making process onto his support materials by building alternating layers of finger-applied paint and cardboard or paper scraps. Romero discusses that practice, and the complex aesthetic relationship it produces, in a 2007 interview with Darrell Roberts:

At some point during grad school or perhaps a bit earlier, I was drawing on found objects and making marks follow the object so that the object became a drawing of itself. One of the things that interested me was how these "object-drawings" had a space into which you could see - a sort of privileged space. This evolved eventually into working with layers of paper, which allowed me to do drawings that grew organically and expanded. In other drawings, what interested me was using the layers of paper to break up the image and to suggest an interior space that is not visible. The impulse all these projects have in common is a desire to make drawings that become places.

Romero also makes small objects from bits of collected trash. They are extensions of his constructions and show similar tendencies for layering and covering but include instances of recognizable text and images, too. For the artist, such works are equally important as "an excuse to touch trash, to express tenderness for trash, to look for impurity."

Born and raised in Latin America, Romero now lives and works in Chicago. He completed a MFA in painting and drawing at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2001, building upon a degree in philosophy he acquired from Boston University. Although his work has been shown in Amsterdam, Basel, and London, this is his first one-man show in the United States.

On view as a complement to Romero's work will be a selection of small collages by Ray Yoshida, a central figure in the visual arts of Chicago, a mentor and friend to the Chicago Imagists, and, of particular relevance, Romero's teacher at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His collage work catalogues fragments of comics and graphic novels as specimens of popular material culture arranged in rows so as to give equal importance to the negative space. Lent to this exhibition is a major canvas by the artist, first shown in his retrospective organized by The Contemporary Museum, Honolulu, in 1998, for which show Yoshida received the CAA Artist Award for a Distinguished Body of Work. Yoshida was also nominated on multiple occasions to receive the prestigious CAA "Teacher of the Year" award. This show honors him as a teacher to a generation of artists who make

extraordinary work outside the mainstream.

Upcoming Exhibition and Events

March 31st - May 1st, 2010

Annabeth Rosen: *Contingency*

Meiling Hom: *Yun Nan = Southern Clouds*

Paul Swenbeck: *Shaker Legend-trip*

Fleisher/Ollman presents work by three artists for whom clay plays a central role in their artistic practices. Annabeth Rosen builds complex organic works out of thousands of individual hand-crafted ceramic pieces of varying size, shape, color and pattern. Mei-Ling Hom's new ceramic work, made in North Carolina with self-taught potter Dan Johnston, continues her ongoing contemplation of cloud imagery and metaphor. Paul Swenbeck's work reinterprets traditional ceramics-in this case Neolithic Jomon pottery-through a 21st Century lens, using contemporary materials and vibrant colors.

May 6th - June 5th, 2010

Anthony Campuzano: *All Right-Still!*

Jennifer Levonian: *Her Creative Slip is Showing*

For more information on the exhibitions or to request images, please contact Amy Adams or Claire Iltis.

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