



JAMES DRAKE

Border of Desire

October 19 – November 24, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 18, 2007 - Holly Johnson Gallery is pleased to present "Border of Desire", a selection of recent drawings and videos by the internationally acclaimed artist, James Drake. An opening reception will be held Friday, October 19th from 6 to 9 p.m.

The works in the exhibition (October 19 – November 24) are the result of a cross-pollination of fluent observation, an Old Master drawing style, inventive mélanges of personal memories, as well as historical associations. Alternating between mural-like drawings, smaller sketches and videos, Drake's investigations take on a poetic and reflective quality. He exposes emotions and realities of individuals and their struggles for social justice. Alongside the drawings, Drake presents *Tongue-Cut Sparrows (Inside Outside)*, which centers on video projections of women standing on a sidewalk while communicating with prisoners inside an El Paso jail. Originally commissioned by SITE Santa Fe, it is currently on view at the 52nd International Venice Biennale, curated by Robert Storr - painter, art historian, critic and Dean of the Yale School of Art.

Commenting on his videos, Drake states, "Each day men and women congregate on the streets below the jails in different cities throughout the world in an effort to communicate with their incarcerated friends and loved ones. They do not speak with words but have invented a simple and effective sign language using their arms and hands. Even though this form of communication is usually on a public street it has a very private aspect to it and is ultimately more personal and immediate. As might be expected, most of the signing deals with family matters and local gossip; however, I asked if they could sign William Shakespeare, William Blake as well as contemporary writers, Cormac McCarthy, Benjamin Saenz, and Jimmy Santiago Baca. Not only were they very receptive to the idea, but they were instrumental in choosing certain passages and works that exemplified their love and loss and desperate need to communicate."

Drake was born in Lubbock, Texas in 1946. He received his B.F.A. (1969) and M.F.A. (1970) from the Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles, California. Throughout his extensive career, Drake has been the recipient of numerous awards and in 2000 his work was included in the prestigious Whitney Biennial. Drake's work can also be seen in the permanent collections of many prominent institutions such as; Birmingham Museum of Fine Art, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Corcoran Gallery of Art, Dallas Museum of Art, Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, El Paso Museum of Art, Frederick R. Weisman Collection, Museo De Arte y Historia in Ciudad Juarez, Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, Federal Reserve Bank of Washington D.C., National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; New Orleans Museum of Art, Phoenix Museum of Art, San Antonio Museum of Art, San Diego Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

In 2009, The University of Texas Press will release a major publication about James Drake and his art. Additionally, a number of scholarly essays have been written about his work by Marylyn Zeitlin, Patricio Chavez, Dave Hickey, Jane Adams, Linda Cathcart, Edward Ruscha, and numerous others. The artist resides in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Holly Johnson Gallery is located at 1411 Dragon Street in Dallas, Texas 75207. Gallery hours are 10 to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and by appointment. For information call 214-369-0169, email info@hollyjohnsongallery.com, or visit www.hollyjohnsongallery.com.