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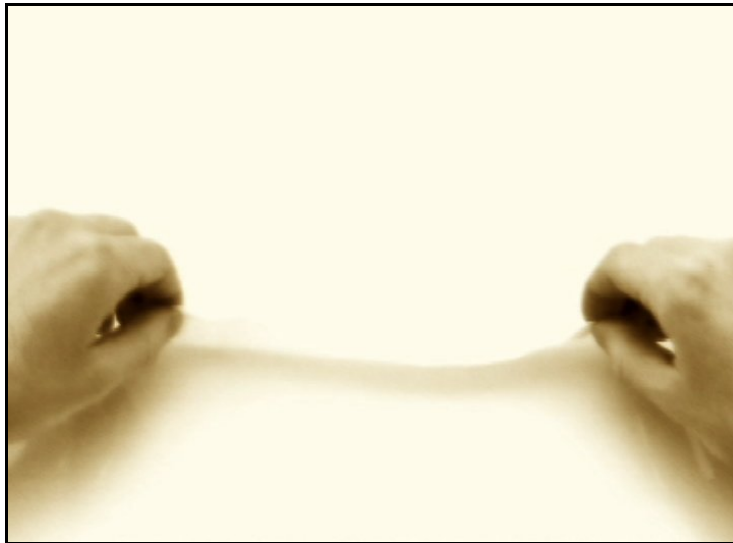
Contact Bruno Mauro: andartsf@aol.com

JORDAN ESSOE - Semaphores

January 16 – February 28, 2009

Opening Reception: Friday January 16, 6:00-8:30pm

Gallery hours: Thursday-Friday 11-5pm & by appointment



Jordan Essoe: Torso of a King, 2008, digital video

Ampersand International Arts will present a new multidisciplinary exhibition about globalization by San Francisco-based artist Jordan Essoe.

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. – 19 November 2008 - Ampersand International Arts is pleased to announce Semaphores, an exhibition by Jordan Essoe, opening January 16 and running through February 28, 2009. This is the artist's first one-person show at the gallery.

The Semaphores exhibition explores the [re]ordering of the world, the [dis]placement of people, and the global distribution of force, wealth, and empathy. "The age of globalism is in part characterized by a latent sense of universal exile, both in the Global South and Global North," says Essoe. "This work juxtaposes psychological exile next to a literal and physical expulsion by violence. The two are bridged through a profound sense of responsibility."

1001 tennessee street san francisco ca 94107
415.285.0170 www.ampersandintlarts.com

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This nuanced installation includes video projected on towers built from sugar cubes, a mirror frame coated in thousands of slivers from shredded brown paper bags, and windows covered with pegboard. Using only torn paper and light from X-ray illuminators, a collage series depicts aerial photographs of a region in northwestern Colombia where agrarian communities are being massacred and displaced by transnational agrofuel industry, drug traffickers, and right-wing paramilitary groups funded by the Colombian government. Essoe reinterprets the figure from Edward Hopper's 1955 painting *Hotel Window* as the observer at-a-distance to these events.

Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius, a short story by Jorge Luis Borges, is used throughout the exhibit as a conceptual lens for addressing the problematic of remaking the world by grand design. Inspired by the fictional society of intellectuals within Borges's narrative, Essoe initiated his own collective of thinkers to contribute to the final piece of the Semaphores project: an installation of 72 images picturing economic democracy, printed in dashes to make the Morse code message for "receiving." Contributors include philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah, author Derrick Jensen, economist Michael Greenstone, ecologist David Wilcove, anthropologist Laura Rival, artist Ken Friedman, poet Bill Berkson, activist Sarah Anderson, and many others.

Jordan Essoe is a San Francisco-based artist whose interdisciplinary exhibition projects focus on sociopolitical and psychological issues of property, identity, exile, and war. His work has most recently been exhibited at TART, San Francisco; The Palm Springs Desert Museum, Palm Springs, CA; Scope Miami, Miami, FL; 21 Grand, Oakland, CA; Intersection for the Arts, San Francisco; PLAYSPACE Gallery, San Francisco; Swarm, Oakland, CA; Red House Gallery, Venice, CA; Meneer de Wit Gallery, Amsterdam, Netherlands; Ha'Kibbutz Gallery, Tel Aviv, Israel; and The Zebra Poetry Film Award, Berlin, Germany. His poetry and critical writing have been published nationally and internationally, he is co-founder of the Humane Slaughter Acts Performance Festival, and he was a 2008 nominee for the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's SECA Award.

For further information please contact:

Bruno Mauro at the gallery at 415-285-0170 / andartsf@aol.com or visit www.ampersandintlarts.com

Contact Jordan Essoe at jordan@essoe.com or visit www.essoe.com