

t r a n s f o r m e r

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 31, 2006

CONTACT: Victoria Reis
202-483-1102

Transformer Launches its Fifth Exhibition Season with:

Appropriately Yours

September 9 – October 14, 2006

Featuring artists:

Julie Chang (CA)

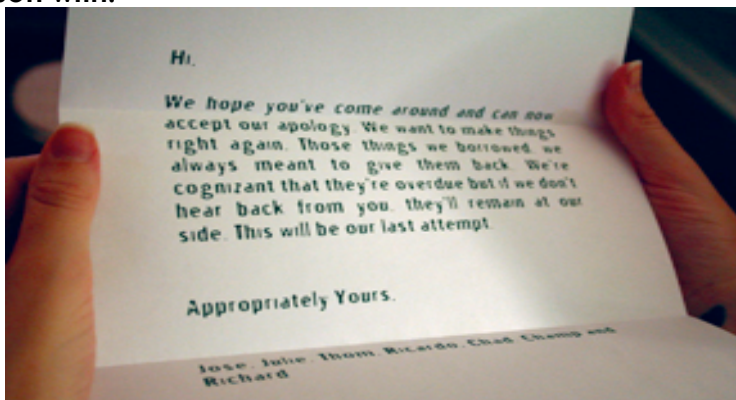
Thom Flynn (DC)

Ricardo Rivera (CA)

Chad Stayrook (NY)

Champ Taylor (DC)

Richard Vosseller (VA)



OPENING RECEPTION: **Saturday, September 9, 2006, 7-9 pm**

ARTIST TALK: **Saturday, September 23, 2006, 1 pm**

Guest curated by artist **José Ruiz** (NY), co-founder of the formerly DC based Decatur Blue artist collective, *Appropriately Yours* threads together six artists working in various mediums who explore, through formal and informal practices, the current sprawl of 'appropriation art', both as an influence and byproduct. Creating a conceptual collage throughout the Transformer space, these artists launch the fifth season of transformational exhibitions presented by Transformer.

In writing about his curatorial concept for this exhibition at Transformer, José Ruiz states:

"I was listening to someone talk about *six degrees of separation* (for about the hundredth time) one day, when I inwardly chuckled the phrase: *six degrees of appropriation*... Although it was a joke, appropriation is an act of separation. Soon after, I thought about six specific artists who use appropriation in their work to varying degrees. I became committed to this term because of its grey areas of authenticity and the conceived question marks that usually follow it: 'Is this even...?' 'How is this...?'

Appropriation has become a branded word and ironically, it feeds off of cultural and official trademarks in order to subsist. Even though the limelight/scrutiny is often given to acts that fixate on mass media or Hollywood, this exhibition chooses to ignore this altogether. Instead, it mirrors and quotes the ideas that encircle identity, history, ritual, poetry and commerce. Since everything is pre-existing, the end product is assembled from a visual language that is both readable and accessible.

And *everything* is done with a person in mind: the viewer. Only they are able to make the situation new. Hence, *Appropriately Yours*."

ROLLING THE DICE: THE SIX SIDES OF APPROPRIATELY YOURS

East Meets West (Coast) – **Julie Chang** investigates issues of identity in relation to race, gender, class, and the commodification of culture. Her large scale painting, *There are other similarities here: a feeling of great prosperity and of good taste. Warm and inviting; for those who want only the best in life*, is extracted from her own personal history as a Chinese-American girl growing up in Orange County in the 80's and early 90's. The imagery comes directly from photographs taken from her parents' home in Orange County and from turn of the century, commercial textile designs. Recognized markers of class and status such as jacquard patterns, golf courses, gated communities and ocean views highlight the

t r a n s f o r m e r

larger ideas of security, expectation and promise. Chang is an MFA Candidate at Stanford University. Her work is represented by Bucheon Gallery in San Francisco, CA.

Paper Trail – **Thom Flynn** takes matters into his own hands and pulls residual materials from the street straight into his studio. Flynn works odd hours for his night job and has the privilege of rummaging the city when most of us are in between states/districts, either at dusk or at dawn. He is able to appreciate DC without the congestion, gentrification and people who divide it, approaching it purely as a subject and canvas. His interest in decrepit advertising posters for go-go and hip-hop groups that are in a sense ephemeral (before the next act gets wheat-pasted on), allow him to create ever changing topographical compositions. A compelling aspect of Flynn's work is that he is able to transform 2-dimensional planes into what appear to be aerial overviews of publicity, re-inserted in new 2-dimensional planes. This disorientation is further mined as he connects the Transformer space with its former self, an alleyway, creating a site-specific stained glass window that allows us into his city.

Sketching Ritualism – **Ricardo Rivera's**, *Oaxaca*, is a binary video disseminating tradition, simulation, cause and effect. An action was documented in Oaxaca, Mexico reiterating the Catholic tradition of running a candle over one's body to cleanse the soul. Rivera then created a computer program tracking the yellow (candle) in the video. The accumulation of the tracking-marks creates a digitally blind contour drawing. As a result, the artist creates a connection and dialogue between a ritual still practiced by curanderos in Mexico with the drawing language and offspring of Giacometti and Schiele. Rivera grew up in a small farming community in the Central California Valley. He is a Drawing Professor at Sacramento City College and is an Artist-in-Residence at the Exploratorium in San Francisco, CA.

Atlas at last – **Chad Stayrook** bears the weight of art history in his new work, *Stumped*. His absurdist interpretation of Rodin's *The Thinker* presents the dichotomy of the emerging conceptual artist. *Does all thought crush the form that lies beneath? Does the trickle-down theory affect artistic influence?* By using his body as a conveyor for contemplation and production, Stayrook's photographic and video work seek to question the boundaries that define his practice. Through this process, he is able to de-myth the greats that came before him the same way Rodin was able to *stump* his predecessors.

Negotiation Cul-de-Sac – **Champ Taylor's** window-installation, *Subcontractor*, envelops the global notion of commerce, labor and convenience with his viewpoint as a consumer of goods. There is a wry element of political criticism in Taylor's handoff of commodities (field recordings and memorabilia) that empathizes with both the middleman and the little man. Commerce requires the assistance of many people, sometimes in various locations all over the world. An air-conditioner, for example, may be manufactured in China, shipped to the US, and find its way to Taylor's basement apartment via Home Depot. On some level, his decision to air-condition his apartment requires an impersonal subcontracting of many others. Champ's work is represented by Cynthia Broan Gallery in New York, NY.

Poetic License – **Richard Vosseller** borrows the structural forms from poetry to create drawings and paintings. The succinctness of the Haiku, for instance, allows him to create simplified abstractions. The syllables contained in each line are matched with an equal amount of brush strokes. So usually, the works are created in triptych format containing 17 strokes (5, 7, 5). As of recent, he has taken the process a step further by taking the finished drawing/painting and re-interpreting the strokes, using the structure dictated by the available space, to create large scale sculptures from construction materials.

Exhibition Hours for *Appropriately Yours*: Wednesday – Saturday 1- 7 pm, and by appointment.

TRANSFORMER is a Washington, D.C. based 501(c) 3 non-profit, artist-centered organization that connects and promotes emerging artists locally, nationally and internationally. Partnering with artists, curators, art spaces and other cultural entities, Transformer serves as a catalyst and advocate for emergent expression in the visual arts. Transformer's 2006/2007 exhibition series is supported by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities/NEA, the Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation, and The Visionary Friends of Transformer.

#

1404 P Street NW Washington, DC 20010 / 202-483-1102 / www.transformergallery.org