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GREGORY EUCLIDE SOLO EXHIBITION

“NEW WORKS”

October 23, 2009 – November 14, 2009

DENVER – David B. Smith Gallery is proud to present *New Works*, a solo exhibition by artist Gregory Euclide, beginning October 23 and running through November 14, 2009. In this new series, the Minneapolis-based artist will create three-dimensional sculptures and paintings that depict the contradictions among land, the cultural construction of landscape, and the practice of landscape painting. A reception for the artist will be held on Friday, October 23, 2009 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Gregory Euclide’s unique and intriguing sculptural works explore the way in which we experience nature, and they challenge the viewer to engage in a dialogue about the contradiction between perceptions of idealized landscapes and real experience. Through an unusually creative use of both natural and synthetic materials, Euclide transports the viewer into the world that he has created. The gallery will provide video views of the work in an attempt to provide Internet viewers with a better understanding of its depth and complexity.

Euclide explores the difficulty of escaping the cultural lens from which we view nature. Images from traditional landscape paintings, wildlife documentaries and travel guides construct our cultural expectations and define how we view land. Euclide’s work explores the conflicts between these images of idealized, picturesque views and the desire to truly experience nature as it is. The pieces in this exhibit contain a mixture of painted images shaped into sculptures with imagery drawn from memory, photo transfers based on traditional nature photography, abstract areas of raw paint, and actual artifacts such as pine needles and moss. The use of materials that are non-biodegradable, such as foam that has been weathered by nature, further emphasizes the invasiveness of the commercial world in which we live. It is this tension between the realistic and the representational, between the pristine and the changed, that makes the work so engaging. Pools of thick, blue liquid paint mimic the properties of the rivers and streams they are used to represent, calling into question the illusion of representational art. Similarly, the exaggerated folds of thick watercolor paper transform the flat, framed image of the traditional landscape into a dimensional topography with many points of view. The three-dimensional forms of these pieces—painted on both sides and containing hidden vignettes and small treasures—encourage the kind of exploration and excitement that might be found in experiencing nature rather than in viewing a traditional picture, further mixing and confusing the untouched and the idealized.

The *Capture* series, first introduced in this exhibition, references Robert Smithson and the tradition of landscape architecture started in America by Fredrick Law Olmsted. Smithson created works of land art where he poured glue on the surface of the earth. Olmstead completely fabricated the pastoral, picturesque, and formal landscapes of New York City’s Central Park from an inhospitable swamp.

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Euclide takes paint and pours it on the land, capturing the local flora and terrain in the paint. On top of the paint, Euclide builds a diorama, depicting the concept of the idealized landscape framework. What the viewer sees in these pieces is more than any one concept—it is the interaction and interconnection between the actual land, the cultural idealization of the landscape, and the art-making process itself. Through this tension, these pieces address the issues of regeneration, recycling, growth and decay, the synthetic and the organic, and the very cycles driven by nature.

For this exhibition at the David B. Smith Gallery, Euclide is creating a multi-sensory installation to reinforce these ideas and themes: “capturing nature” as it is on film, in paint, or at a scenic photo turnout (which someone has designated as “beautiful”). Similar in structure to an overlook in a park, with guardrail, gravel, cigarette butts, garbage and road noise, Euclide’s work brings both local land and landscape into the gallery with a large scale “Capture” taking place in the mountains of Colorado. Simultaneously resembling views from the Hudson River School and a chemical spill, the work creates a tension that asks the viewer to think about the irony and political motives behind things like the scenic turnout.

Gregory Euclide is an artist and teacher living in the Twin Cities, in Minnesota. He received his MFA from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, and he has recently been awarded two Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Initiative Grants through the National Endowment for the Arts and a Jerome Foundation Residency through the Blacklock Nature Society. In 2008, his work was featured in *Badlands: New Horizons in Landscape* at MASS MoCA. Euclide has recently had solo exhibitions in Seattle and Los Angeles, and he has been featured at international art fairs. His work will be exhibited at David B. Smith Gallery’s booth at SCOPE Miami 2009.

About David B. Smith Gallery

David B. Smith Gallery is Denver's venue for emerging contemporary art. Since its founding in 2007, the gallery has been committed to presenting intelligent and culturally relevant exhibitions featuring work from some of today's most compelling artists with growing international reputations. Through participation in leading art fairs and extensive media coverage, David Smith has cultivated a strong regional, national and international collector audience. In August 2008, *The New York Times* hailed the gallery as offering "an exciting contrast of cutting edge works." In addition to its curatorial program, David B. Smith maintains an active publishing division, Limited Addiction, which produces limited edition artist prints and monographs.

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