

GRACE ALEXANDER CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

"MYSTERY"

March 17, 2005 – April 27, 2005

Opening reception: March 16, 2005, 18:00-20:00

Grace Alexander Contemporary Art Gallery is pleased to present the new works of Chen Wenbo and Angelo Filomeno. The exhibition will feature their paintings related to the theme of Mystery. Both artists pursue their ideas with urgency, focusing on their obsessions – for Chen Wenbo by way of abstraction, for Angelo Filomeno by way of figuration.

Chen Wenbo

Premiering in Zurich last October for "Open" the gallery's inaugural show, Chinese artist Chen Wenbo is a painter whose past work suggests the cinema: dream like pictures of rearview mirrors, dice, billiard balls and pills, as well as individuals in trance states of eroticized body transformation.

On this occasion, Chen Wenbo will exhibit his most recent series of acrylic on canvas paintings entitled "Ten Thousands Times of Love" (2005). Chen Wenbo's photographs of the kaleidoscope's permutations become the departure point for his paintings. He is fascinated by the kaleidoscope's abstractions through mirroring prisms of color, as well as the unlimited and magical worlds it creates. The artist situates his paintings in the tension and balance between beauty and chance.

In contrast to the cool cross-color palate of earlier pictures, these works have a warm glow, and they are imbued with a pulsating energy, yet appear motionless Zen at the same time.

Chen Wenbo (b 1969) has exhibited internationally, including such group shows as, "All under heaven" (2004), Koninklijk Museum, Antwerp, Belgium; "East of the south in the west/West of the south in the east" (2004), Villa Arson, Nice, France; "Chinart" (2003), Museo Arte Contemporanea di Roma, Rome, Italy; "Representing the People" (1999) at the Laing Gallery in New Castle Upon Tyne, among others. He has had a museum solo exhibition: "Back Door" (2003), He Xiangning Art Museum, Shenzhen, China.

Forthcoming exhibitions include: Chinese contemporary art exhibition at Kunst Museum, Bern, Switzerland (June 2005); Biennale de l'art contemporain chinois de. MC1, Montpellier, France (June 2005); "Follow Me! Contemporary Chinese art at the turn of the millennium" at the Mori Museum in Tokyo (July 2005).

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Angelo Filomeno

Angelo Filomeno is an Italian born artist, who currently lives in New York. This will be the first time his works are exhibited in Switzerland. His paintings are composed of thread stitched onto silk shantung. The threads are meticulously sewn into the pungent colored silk, and a certain impasto is created through the shimmering of crystals and garnets coating the surface.

The word "thread" when applied to storytelling is the element that links things together. The paintings are dramas that short circuit traditional narratives, moving directly into the unconscious. They come from very deep feelings, often tied with Filomeno's inner world and his deep emotions. His work is also strongly inspired by the countryside of southern Italy where he grew up, and where he still returns regularly for long periods of time. The influence and inspiration can be seen in many elements in his paintings, where animals, insects, flowers, skulls and imaginary hybrids enact rituals of life. The paintings are dark and fun; beautiful and strange; mysterious and striking, scary and sensual.

Among other paintings in the exhibition, "Beast" displays the skull of a fantasy animal with horns and pointed razor-sharp teeth, and it is surrounded by dragonflies, flowers, cockroaches that feast, defecate, become luminous. In this canvas, Filomeno's penchant for mirroring imagery lends the work a heraldic aura – and this mirroring can be found in numerous works of his.

A series of smaller and most recent paintings (2004) are entitled "Excursioner Angel", where the presence of emblems and shape shifting seem to reach their apotheosis. In the center of each square of midnight blue hovers a winged flying insect. In this nighttime sky with crystals twinkling as the heavenly stars, the insects and other creatures he depicts appear as incandescent constellations.

Angelo Filomeno has exhibited internationally in group exhibitions such as, "Fashion, Italian Style" (2003) curated by Valerie Steele at the Museum at FIT, New York. "Il racconto del filo" (2003) (curated by Francesca Pasini and Giorgio Verzotti) at the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MART), Rovereto, Italy. "Re: Duchamp" (2001) a travel exhibition (curated by Christina Wang) to the Istanbul Bienali, the 49th Venice Biennale, among others. "Le Jardin" (2000), (curated by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Laurence Bossé and Hans Ulrich Obrist) at the Villa Medici, Academie de France in Rome, Italy.

For more information or to request an appointment, please contact the gallery at +41 (0)1 289 5612. or mail@gracealexander.com

Gallery hours: Monday to Friday 11:00 – 18:30. Saturday 12:00-16:00, or by appointment