

# LEHMAN COLLEGE ART GALLERY

Bedford Park Boulevard West • Bronx, New York 10468 (718) 960-8731 <http://www.lehman.edu/gallery>

**February 3 – May 4, 2010**

## **Nature, Once Removed: *The (Un)Natural World in Contemporary Drawing***

**Melissa Barrett, Melissa Brown, William Crump, Lorenzo De Los Angeles, Nicholas Di Genova, Felix Esquivel, Chie Fueki, Trenton Doyle Hancock, Arturo Herrera, Jackie Hoving, Elizabeth Huey, Daniel Johnston, Darina Karpov, Gary Panter, Christopher Patch, Lamar Peterson, Angela Piehl, Peter Saul, Craig Taylor, Christopher Ulivo, and John Wesley**

**Sean McCarthy, Guest Curator**

**Reception: Monday, March 15, 2010, 6:00-8:00 pm**

Lehman College Art Gallery is pleased to present **Nature, Once Removed: The (Un)Natural World in Contemporary Drawing**. The exhibition presents a selection of work by 21 contemporary artists who use drawing to explore our alienated relationship to nature, creating oblique narratives inflected with irony, anxiety, grotesquerie and satire. Much of the stylization of plants, animals and geological forms in the show bears the influence of popular culture, demonstrating the degree to which our contemporary conception of the natural world has been shaped by cartoons and advertising. The work in the show varies significantly in its treatment of the theme, alternately mythic (Huey, Saul), abstract (Crump, Herrera, Taylor), fantastic (Fueki, Hancock, Karpov, Ulivo), political (Esquivel, Piehl), nostalgic (Barrett, Panter), pessimistic (Di Genova, Hoving), deadpan (Brown, Patch) and wryly funny (De Los Angeles, Johnston, Peterson, Wesley). A variety of formal and technical means are on display, including woodburning, bravura brushwork, meticulous collage and finely polished graphite drawing.

Following the movements of Pop in the 1960s and post-modern appropriation in the 1980s, it seemed that nature as a subject for art was largely moribund. The use of catchphrases such as "Forest of Signs" to describe the contemporary condition was an indication that culture had replaced nature as the model and font of artistic creation. However, in recent years, there has been a remarkable resurgence of interest in animals, plants, and landscapes as subjects, though they are now often filtered through a pop-inflected consciousness. Artists now are typically no longer drawn to the natural world through an attempt to explore it scientifically (like naturalists) or to express the sublimity of nature (like deists), but instead to examine the border separating the natural from the unnatural and the question of humankind's existence within or without the sphere of nature. The careers of a handful of artists working against the grain of the 60s, 70s and 80s have had a significant impact on this trend among younger artists, and this exhibition attempts to trace that thread by including work of both seminal and emerging artists.