



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 8, 2009



still from *Simulations*, 2009, single channel digital video installation

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam – Galerie Quynh is pleased to present *North South East West* – an exhibition of video, objects and photo-based work by pioneering media artist Bruce Yonemoto.

Bruce Yonemoto is acclaimed for his collaborations with his brother Norman as well as for his independent practice. His work references the clichés and myths of American culture and the influence of media – most notably Hollywood productions – on society and culture. At the same time his work addresses issues such as identity, race and ethnicity and more generally universal preoccupations with time, life and death. The artist explores America's collective memory and distorts reality into a semi-permanent state of illusion and stupor. We are faced with aspects of our daily lives that rarely appear as clear as in Yonemoto's documentations and manipulations of memory. Although his practice often references America, his works have cross-cultural inferences to which viewers of different cultures can relate.

Of Japanese descent, the US-born and -raised artist explores issues of cultural and racial identity/stereotypes in the photographic series *NSEW* (2007). In this Hollywood-like staged production, Yonemoto ponders tradition and history, acknowledging Asian soldiers who have been omitted in the annals of the American Civil War. The models remind us that race and ethnicity do not necessarily coincide with cultural and national identity. The large scale of these photographs elicits a confrontational relationship with the viewer. Also on display is a selection of images from *NSEW* presented in small daguerreotype cases. The color portraits of the handsome Asian models in Civil War regalia are all the more curious when viewed in these original 19th century frames.

In addition to the *NSEW* series and older video and objects, Yonemoto will present a new work entitled *Simulations* (2009) – a video installation commissioned by Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles. The work relates to the artist's childhood memories surrounding his fascination with Disneyland. Reflecting on Baudrillard's examination of Disneyland in his 1983 essay *Simulations*, published by Semiotext(e)'s New Foreign Agent Series, Yonemoto recreates the theme park's iconic Matterhorn Mountain as a sculptural model, which is viewed simultaneously with the large time lapse video



projection highlighting the process of its creation. The artist states that “Disneyland’s Matterhorn becomes *the* allegorical referent, the ‘hyperreal’ Matterhorn of our collective memory.” Recorded from home movies found on YouTube, screams from riders on the Matterhorn are interspersed with dialogue from the 50s TV series *Disneyland*, now commonly known as *The Wonderful World of Disney*. The rather ominous video, with the surreal movements of the rapid prototyping machine, also recalls Léger’s *Le Ballet Mécanique* and other experimental film work of the 1920s.

Bruce Yonemoto has been honored with numerous awards and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Film Institute, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Maya Deren Award for Experimental Film and Video. He and his brother, Norman, were the subject of a major mid-career survey at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles in 1999. Bruce’s solo installations, photographs and sculptures have been featured in one person shows at institutions such as the ICC in Tokyo, the ICA in Philadelphia and the Kemper Museum in Kansas City and in gallery exhibitions at Alexander Gray, New York, Blum & Poe, Los Angeles, Tomio Koyama, Tokyo. His work has also been featured in ‘Los Angeles 1955-85’ at the Pompidou Center, Paris, and the Generali Foundation, Vienna, The Getty Research Center in LA, and the 2008 Gwangju Biennial, Korea. His works can be found in various public collections around the world including the Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Yonemoto is Professor of Studio Art at the University of California, Irvine. He is represented by Alexander Gray Associates in New York and Tomio Koyama Gallery in Japan.

Exhibition Dates: 17 December – 16 January 2009
Opening Reception: Thursday, the 17th of December from 6 – 8 PM
Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10 AM – 6 PM
Closed on Sundays and Mondays
Contact: Mai Ardia (English); Huynh Kim Yen (Vietnamese)
tel/fax: +84 8 3836 8019
info@galeriequynh.com

###