

DAVID B SMITH GALLERY

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Josh Keyes: *Collision*

November 5 – December 11, 2010

Opening Reception: November 5, 7pm – 10pm

Free and open to the Public. Artist in Attendance.

DENVER – The David B. Smith Gallery is pleased to announce the opening of Josh Keyes' new solo exhibition, ***Collision***. Keyes is a widely collected, highly regarded artist with a strong national and international following. He is well known for his technical craftsmanship, juxtaposition of real and surreal elements, and sharp commentary on the challenging issues of our time.

This exhibition will be on display from November 5 through December 11, with an opening on November 5 from 7pm to 10pm with the artist. Caleb Neelon has written an essay to accompany this show.

Collision explores the concept of transformation, and has both personal significance for the artist as well as global meaning and implications. Transformation – as represented by the animals which Keyes paints with such emotion and realism – could be of a process, cycle, society or civilization, or the transformation of an individual. For Keyes, these works are an extreme and literal examination of the idea of transformation expressed through his personal iconography and imagery, and enhanced by artistic expertise.

Keyes derived the idea for these works from a sixteenth century alchemical engraving of a sequence of images depicting the death and resurrection of a king. The alchemist is one who combines different materials, and through a process involving chemistry and mysticism, orchestrates and transforms. Keyes sees the artist as alchemist – orchestrating and enhancing a sequence of images in combination with a unique personal aesthetic to form a linear, sequential story. For this exhibition, Keyes worked on these paintings concurrently, unlike previous bodies of work where each painting was conceived and completed independently.

The 10 paintings in ***Collision*** form a story of transformation – each an individual work of art, and yet each connected to the others. Using his trademark animals and symbols, Keyes focuses on change in the context of natural challenges and man-made threats, juxtaposing beauty, fear, hope and disaster in a kaleidoscope pattern which challenges the viewer to search the painting and develop his/her own interpretation and understanding. Keyes has included his largest painting to date, ***Sowers***, 40" by 120" in this exhibition. ***Collision***, however, is just the first installment – the first chapter in an ongoing story. We have much to look forward to.

About the Artist

Josh Keyes was born in Tacoma, Washington. He received a BFA in 1992 from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an MFA in 1998 from Yale. Keyes is drawn to the clinical and often cold vocabulary of scientific textbook illustrations, which express the empirical "truth" of the world and natural phenomena. He infuses into a rational stage set many references to contemporary events along with images and themes from his personal mythology and experience. These elements come together in an unsettling vision, one that speaks to the challenges of our time. Keyes currently lives and works in Portland Oregon with his wife, graphic designer Lisa Ericson.

About David B. Smith Gallery

David B. Smith Gallery is Denver's venue for compelling 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 dynamic 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.