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Regen Projects II
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ELLIOTT HUNDLEY: SEMELE

May 26 – July 1, 2011

Gallery Hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm

Opening Reception: Thursday, May 26, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Regen Projects is pleased to announce an exhibition of new work by Los Angeles based artist **Elliott Hundley**. This exhibition will feature large-scale wall bound collages, sculptures, and paintings loosely based on the Greek tragedy “The Bacchae” written by Euripides. **Hundley** begins by orchestrating elaborate photo shoots where the sitters are adorned with costumes and props acting out key moments from the narrative. These photographs are blown up to become large-scale backgrounds, and are also cut up and the figures collaged to the surface. Piecing together photographs, paper, pins, wire, bamboo, foam, fabric, textiles, embroidery, and found ephemera, **Hundley** builds up the surface layer by layer in his formally elaborate constructions.

Elliott Hundley’s work weaves a complex set of images, objects, and texts onto the surface of mixed media assemblages and two-dimensional compositions. Drawing upon narrative, mythology, art history, philosophy, drama, and history, **Hundley** creates an idiosyncratic visual language that melds the familiar with the foreign. The abstracted surface shifts and reinvents, foreground and background meld and interchange to create a formal distortion and friction. There is a dialogue between classical antiquity and the relics of modernity, time follows a non-linear sequence that looks both backward and forward. The blending of **Hundley**’s own personal and symbolic world with contemporary and ancient cultural references weaves a unique and fragmented tableau in his work.

Hundley’s all-encompassing practice defies traditional classifications of art. Medium becomes obsolete as photography, painting, collage, drawing, performance, assemblage, and sculpture coalesce. His multifaceted works create interconnections that re-imagine form, the structuring of the surface, and conventional notions of the material process. **Hundley** draws upon numerous formal and conceptual dichotomies: delicate/elaborate, reality/fantasy, growth/decay, death/rebirth, falling apart/coming together, accretion/reveal. Within this play of opposites, a tension is created that draws the viewer in and invites them to explore the event unfolding.

In “The Bacchae,” Dionysus returns to his birthplace to clear his mother’s name (Semele), and enact vengeance upon those who maligned her name and refuse to recognize his existence as a god. This is a gruesome tale of violence, reverie, and revenge. The large-scale collages reference three central figures: Semele, Agave, and Dionysus. The loosely figurative sculptures allude to the three sisters (Agave, Ino, and Autonoë) and conjure themes of dressing up, costume, disguise, and drag. The paintings offer an abstracted glimpse into the narrative and moments of loss and remembrance.

“Materials accumulate on the surfaces...Fragments have been gathered and secured; the articles then form constituent parts of new concrete and poetic connections – like when a bent drinking straw meets an ancient sculpture on a swatch of flashy fabric. New meanings emerge from the wreckage of the world and its’ different tales. In **Hundley**’s work, the sense of dejection spawned by the fragmentation of the world and of meaning, a feeling of melancholy often conjoined with the collage, is combined with a playful and edifying gluttony with respect to the substance and its aesthetic and thematic possibilities.”

(Tine Colstrup, “**Hundley**” in The World is Yours: Contemporary Art, published by the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Denmark, 2009, p. 57)

Elliott Hundley studied at the Rhode Island School of Design, Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, and UCLA. In 2006, he had his first solo exhibition at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles. **Hundley**’s work is included in several museum collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; and the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Denmark. **Hundley** has an upcoming solo exhibition at the Wexner Center for the Arts, Ohio which will open in September 2011. A catalogue will be published on the occasion of the exhibition.

An opening reception for **Elliott Hundley** will take place on Thursday, May 26, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. For further information please contact Jennifer Loh, Heather Harmon, or Stacy Bengtson at the gallery.