

PRESS ALERT



FOTO FEST



HOUSTON CENTER
FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

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Ben Aqua, *Business Deal*
From the series *Business Deals in the New Future*, 2007
Courtesy of the artist

VIEWFINDER

New Images from Texas Artists

From the *Talent in Texas* Series

November 6, 2008 – January 10, 2009

Presented by

FotoFest and Houston Center for Photography (HCP)

Houston, Texas

Opening Receptions:

November 6, 2008 6-9pm at FotoFest

November 7, 2008 6-9pm at Houston Center for Photography

(October 1, 2008) **FotoFest** and **Houston Center for Photography (HCP)** join together in a first-ever exhibition collaboration to commission and present a new show of emerging Texas photographic artists. **VIEWFINDER: New Images from Texas Artists** is a new exhibit featuring 15 artists from across the state – from Beaumont to El Paso and Lubbock to Laredo. The organizations have commissioned **Arturo Palacios** (Director, Art Palace, Austin) and **Risa Puleo** (Assistant Curator of American and Contemporary Art, Blanton Museum of Art, Austin) to co-curate the exhibit, the third in the *Talent in Texas* series. The exhibit will be split between the two spaces – FotoFest Headquarters Downtown and Houston Center for Photography in the Museum District.

Viewfinder opens at FotoFest Headquarters **Thursday, November 6, 2008 6 - 9pm** and at HCP the following evening, **Friday, November 7, 2008 6 - 9pm**. Accompanying the opening receptions will be on-site performances by exhibiting artist Eduardo Garcia and his sound collaborator, Alex Rodriguez.

Viewfinder explores the wide scope of photographic art practice today from traditional film-based still photography to video and installation work. Featured artists are: **Ben Aqua** (Austin); **Rebecca S. Carter** (Dallas); **Piotr Chizinski** (Lubbock); **Beau Comeaux** (Dallas); **Emilie Duval** (Beaumont); **Robin Germany** (Slaton); **Buster Graybill** (Huntsville); **Anna Krachey** (Austin); **Ivan Lozano** (Austin); **Lupita Murillo Tinnen** (Fort Worth); **Justin Parr** (San Antonio); **Zeque Peña** (El Paso); **Eduardo Garcia** (Laredo); **Ansen Seale** (San Antonio) and **David Waddell** (Houston). The work explores themes that are both personal and universal; that are local and international.

Artist talks, panel discussions and other educational programming will be announced in the coming weeks and will be posted on the FotoFest and HCP websites when finalized. For more information please visit the websites at www.fotofest.org or www.hcponline.org.

ARTIST DESCRIPTIONS

Ben Aqua (Austin)

Ben Aqua presents two series of photos. One, an imagined post-apocalyptic Utopia populated by fashionable survivors, the other, his *Veronica* series, an extended situational portrait project examining the life of the titular young woman in her home and personal space.

Rebecca Carter (Dallas)

In order to remove her hand from the direct capturing of images, Rebecca Carter outfits her cat with a head-mounted camera triggered automatically and allows it wander outside in her backyard. The resulting images offer unconventional and unexpected viewpoints rendered in otherworldly color and angles.

Piotr Chizinski (Lubbock)

Chizinski's digitally stitched photo collages of friend's homes are layered with schemata that describe and quantify the owner's various possessions. Using a social theory formula (Stuart Social Status Scale) developed by sociologist F. Stuart Chapin in the 1930s, and modified by modern theorists, the spaces and, subsequently the inhabitants, are distilled to a number indicating their social class standing. Objects such as original works of art are additive while others like a makeshift card table/dining table are subtractive.

Beau Comeaux (Dallas)

Beau Comeaux's large-format night photographs depict rural and suburban scenes devoid of a human presence with eerie stillness reminiscent of classic horror movies.

Emilie Duval (Beaumont)

French-born Duval's films show a nostalgia for youth and reflect her own experience as a outsider in a foreign land.

Robin Dru Germany (Slaton)

Texas Tech University associate professor Robin Dru Germany creates photographs that are seemingly physiological or medical in nature. After closer examination the apparent microbes, veins and nerves are revealed to be parts of flowering plants, tree roots and stalks, richly colored by the artist.

Buster Graybill (Huntsville)

Graybill assumes a rich and different identity when making the performative photographs in his *Get'n Groceries* series. This persona, a caricature of rural Texas "rednecks," skins a deer tethered to his driveway parked pickup, recording the event with an infrared camera.

Anna Krachey (Austin)

Austinite Anna Krachey elevates the value of items commonly thought to have lost their worth by purchasing them from online site such as eBay and Craigslist and repurposing them for her art. Krachey's installation presents her current obsession with show horse ephemera – the documents of highly priced animals, esteemed to near mythic proportions by many in Texas.

Ivan Lozano (Austin)

Video artist Ivan Lozano's installation *Back Room Lament* presents heavily abstracted and filtered images from 1960s "cult" gay film comedies. The films, with their now anachronistic portrayal of a free-spirited, AIDS-free gay lifestyle, are the basis from which Lozano constructs a memorial to those who have died from the AIDS epidemic. The ghostly, disembodied figures float about and reference 19th century spirit photography.

Lupita Murillo Tinnen (Fort Worth)

Lupita Murillo Tinnen "documents the undocumented" in her photographs of illegal immigrant families. Herself the child of undocumented immigrants, Murillo Tinnen is personally aware of the fear and anxiety felt by this (not so) secret community of immigrants that live among the general population.

Justin Parr (San Antonio)

Justin Parr's *Portrait of the Artist as a City* uses his video self-portrait to portray the city of San Antonio as a place with a peculiar rhythm and pace. The film, made with digital still photographs, exploits a glitch in the camera's capabilities to show a narrative that steps back and jumps forward at an unpredictable rate.

Zeque Peña (El Paso)

Sound artist and DJ Zeque Peña's photographs in his *Zechs Marquise* series were created as illustrations of characters in his music. The larger than life-sized images embody the dark, apocalyptic soundtrack Peña has composed. The soundtrack accompanies the work in the gallery for this exhibit.

Eduardo Garcia (Laredo)

Like Zeque Peña, Eduardo Garcia is better known as a sound artist. He is a member of the AKA collective and a founder of Sound Art Space in Laredo.

Ansen Seale (San Antonio)

Seale has modified his digital still camera to record time and movement on a single frame, subverting and "freezing" a sequence presented linearly in time-based media like video. Images that appear digitally stretched and blurred emerge from the camera as-is without manipulation.

David Waddell (Houston)

David Waddell hand crafts unnatural creatures made from common household objects. Inhabiting his staged environments in these short video works, Waddell first makes still photographs of his creations performing natural acts such as eating, hunting, procreating and raising their young. Animated by scrolling the still images on an iPod, the result is a contemporary emulation of 19th century kinetoscope/zoetrope technology.

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For more information on *Viewfinder* or for visuals, please contact:

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For related programming including artist talks, exhibition tours with the curators, and a panel discussion on current practices of curatorial work, please visit us on the web: www.fotofest.org, www.hcponline.org