

Ken Solomon

Post Party

April 12 - May 17, 2008

Josée Bienvenu gallery is pleased to present *Post Party*, Ken Solomon's second one-person exhibition. *Post Party* explores the imagery and iconography of the U.S. postal system. Whether it is building a public mailbox from sent parcels, falsifying postage stamps, making a teepee-sized envelope, a giant rubber stamp of a blank stamp, or a video documenting the journey of a letter never sent, Ken Solomon erects monuments to a soon-to-be extinct mode of communication.

The works are a meshing of mathematics and whimsy. The process is intensive, pushing repetition to examine nuance. In some cases, as in *Plastic Parts*, Solomon draws the same image hundreds and hundreds of times. These replications of the United States Plastic Man stamp are drawn and painted on 21 separate envelopes that are subsequently mailed and disseminated to reconvene at the gallery as a whole after a sometimes long journey through the intricacies and idiosyncrasies of the US postal system. Precise control and uncertainty play together, allowing for third party mark making - the stamps, stickers or marker lines added by the post office - and the occurrence of works getting lost.

Mailed Boxes is composed of 30 sent parcels piled-up to replicate a life sized blue public mailbox. *Greta With Two Navajo Earrings* is an oversized envelope that stands as a teepee. *Stamp of a Stamp* is a four feet high functional rubber stamp. *Security*, and *Security from Chase Bank* are drawings of the patterns of the insides of security envelopes; they reveal the infinite variations of patterns very reminiscent of 1970s minimalist abstractions. In the single channel video *Love Letter*, a character played by the artist is seen walking through numerous frames, each frame wiping off the screen. On the way, he passes numerous mailboxes but can never commit to mail the letter.

For his recent solo project booth at VOLTA NY 2008, Ken Solomon set up an early voting bureau. He drew his own stamps of 5 presidential candidates. The originals are small hand painted images of Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, Mike Huckabee, John McCain, and Ralph Nader. He subsequently printed hundreds of sheets of stamps for the public to cast their vote. An official count of the votes will take place during the opening party.

Born in Washington, D.C., Ken Solomon lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. His work has been included in various group shows around the United States. Several of his drawings are included in MoMA's permanent collection and *Micro & Soft on Macintosh Apple*, a collaborative video with Marco Maggi was recently included in *New Perspectives in Latin American Art, 1930-2006: Selections from a Decade of Acquisitions* at the museum. Last December, his video *The Wig Project* premiered at the Sagamore Hotel in Miami. Currently, his work can be seen at The FLAG Art Foundation, New York in its inaugural exhibition *Attention to Detail*, curated by Chuck Close.