



For Immediate Release

HEATHER RAQUEL PHILLIPS  
Mixed

DEBORAH RAVEN  
Semblance

Sage Projects, 333 South St. Philadelphia, PA  
October 4 – October 25, 2009  
Opening Reception: Sunday, October 11, 6-8pm

SAGE PROJECTS is pleased to present an exhibition of works by photographers Heather Raquel Phillips and Deborah Raven. This will be the 7th exhibition at Sage Projects and the first devoted exclusively to photography.

**Heather Raquel Phillips** explores the complications of racial identity in the photo project entitled **Mixed**. This exhibition is a portrait series of people who are unique in their composite ancestral backgrounds, while sharing the collective experience of being bi-racial/ multi-ethnic in a so-called "post-racial" America.

To view this series of photographs is to encounter Phillips' subjects eye-to-eye. It is an activity that is at times both tender and confrontational, as each person's expression of identity comes across via inescapable gazes. The artist has included each subjects' ethnic background, according to how they wished to be described along with questions, answers and synopses of ideas that engage racial identities.

The motivation for the project is a desire to further investigate the social construct of race that goes beyond the cultural classifications that minimize the people photographed. This exhibition celebrates the complexities of bi-racial identity through dignified portraiture. It's less obsessed with ethnic taxonomy than broadening the ongoing cultural conversations beyond black and white. The subjects aren't simply "half" this or that, they are 100% Americans, expressions of connectivity whose faces remind us that we are all composite parts of a whole.

The photographs by **Deborah Raven** explore how we look at animals in a show entitled **Semblance**. The images were photographed in Natural History Museums, at

the Midway, aquariums and on farms. The images consider how animals are "subjected and worshiped, bred and sacrificed". One series depicts "tethered" animals at the midway, printed on fine art paper. Portraits of taxidermy subjects found in Natural History Museums are printed on Thai Mulberry paper and confront the viewer dead on. There are encaustic works on panels treating skeletal remains as organic still lives. And finally a series of aquatic "Liquid Life" images mounted on plexi-glass, suggesting the very essence of contained life in an aquarium.

*"The life of a wild animal becomes an ideal, an ideal internalized as a feeling surrounding a repressed desire. The image of a wild animal becomes the starting point of a daydream: a point from which the day-dreamer departs with his back turned."* – John Berger, About Looking

SAGE PROJECTS 333 South Street, Philadelphia, PA.

The gallery is free and open to the public

Wednesdays and Thursdays 12-6pm, Friday, Saturday and Sundays 2-8pm

Validated parking is available (see the website for details)

For images and more information 215-706-0406 or:

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