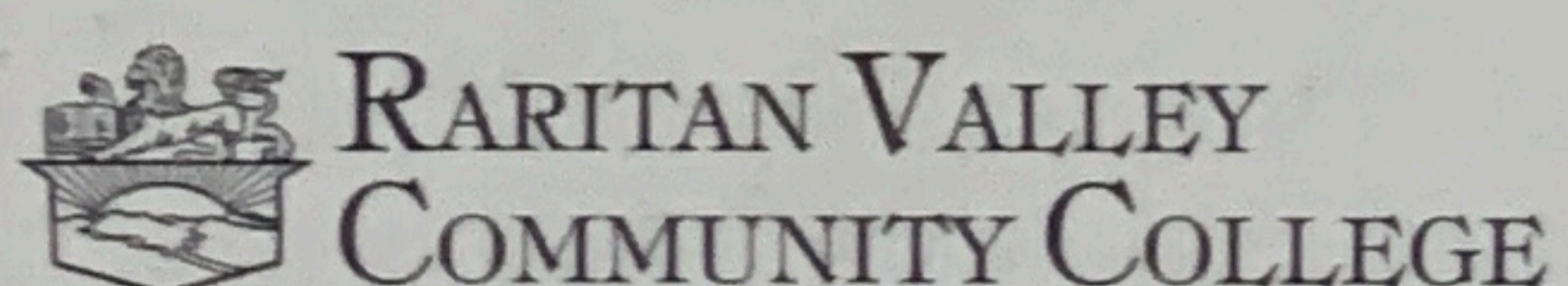


NO COUNTRY IS AN ISLAND:

ISSUES OF FREEDOM AND DIASPORA IN CARIBBEAN ART

SEPTEMBER 12 THROUGH OCTOBER 20, 2005

RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE GALLERY



ROUTE 28 WEST AND LAMINGTON ROAD
NORTH BRANCH, NEW JERSEY 08876



Cover Art: Albert Chong, *What Will Be Your Next Incarnation*,
Gelatin silver print with inscribed copper mat, 43.5x51, 1990

Back Cover Art: Richard Fung, *Islands*, Video, 9 minutes, 2002

CURATOR'S STATEMENT

I want to thank all the artists who participated in the exhibition.

I would also like to thank Donna Stackhouse for her persistence and hard work.

I would like to thank Raritan Valley Community College and all the persons at Raritan who helped to make this a special project. I must give thanks to as well, our funders because we couldn't have done it without them.

Yoland Skeete, Sumei Multidisciplinary Arts Center, Newark, NJ

This program is made possible, in part, by funds from the
New Jersey State Council of the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment
for the Arts, and administered by the Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission through the
State/County Partnership Local Arts Program and also made possible in part by the
Raritan Valley Community College Foundation

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Large
Print

CARLOS BETANCOURT

Puerto Rico

CARLOS BETANCOURT WAS BORN AND RAISED IN SAN JUAN PUERTO RICO. In 1981 he moved to Miami, where he studied art and architecture at Miami-Dade Community College and went on to receive his Associate of Science Degree at the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale in 1987, with a concentration in industrial design and art history. His work is recognized in part by his large format vinyl photographs. He is also known for The Sounds Symbols Project, a monumental sculpture/installation he erected on the sands of Miami Beach for twenty-four hours on the eve of the vernal equinox in the year 2000. A prestigious commission was awarded to him by Miami-Dade's Art in Public Places Trust for the creation of a monumental installation at Miami International Airport, to be located within one of the airports' terminal. Recently, he has been contracted by Sony Music, NY, to create the cover art for the most recent album of Gloria Estefan, *Unwrapped*. Carlos Betancourt has received numerous awards and grants, such as the Florida Department of State Millennium Cultural Recognition Award, a National Endowment for the Arts grant, and a Miami Beach Arts Council Grant. He has exhibited internationally and represented the United States in the 2001 biennial in Santo Domingo. Carlos Betancourt's artwork is part of various respected private collections and is included in prominent public collections such as the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington, DC, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Fort Lauderdale Museum of Art, the Centro Atlantico de Arte Moderno in the Canary Islands, the Museo de Arte Moderno in Santo Domingo, San Antonio Museum of Art in Texas, the Lowe Art Museum and the Bass Museum in Miami. His work has also been exhibited successfully at Art Basel Miami Beach. He is represented by Robert Miller Gallery in New York. The artist currently lives in Miami, Florida.

Carlos Betancourt

#1 *Los Iluminados*, (from *Interventions in Wynwood II series*), Metallic Lambda print, Edition 3/3, 33.25x35.5 (framed), 2003

#2 *Watching the Maize on the Altiplano* (from the *Worshipping My Ancestors Series*), Metallic Lambda print, Edition 2/3, 73x52 (framed), 2001

#3 *Daca Bagua* (from *Letters to Bartolome de las Casas*), Print on Sintra, 70.5x48, 2002

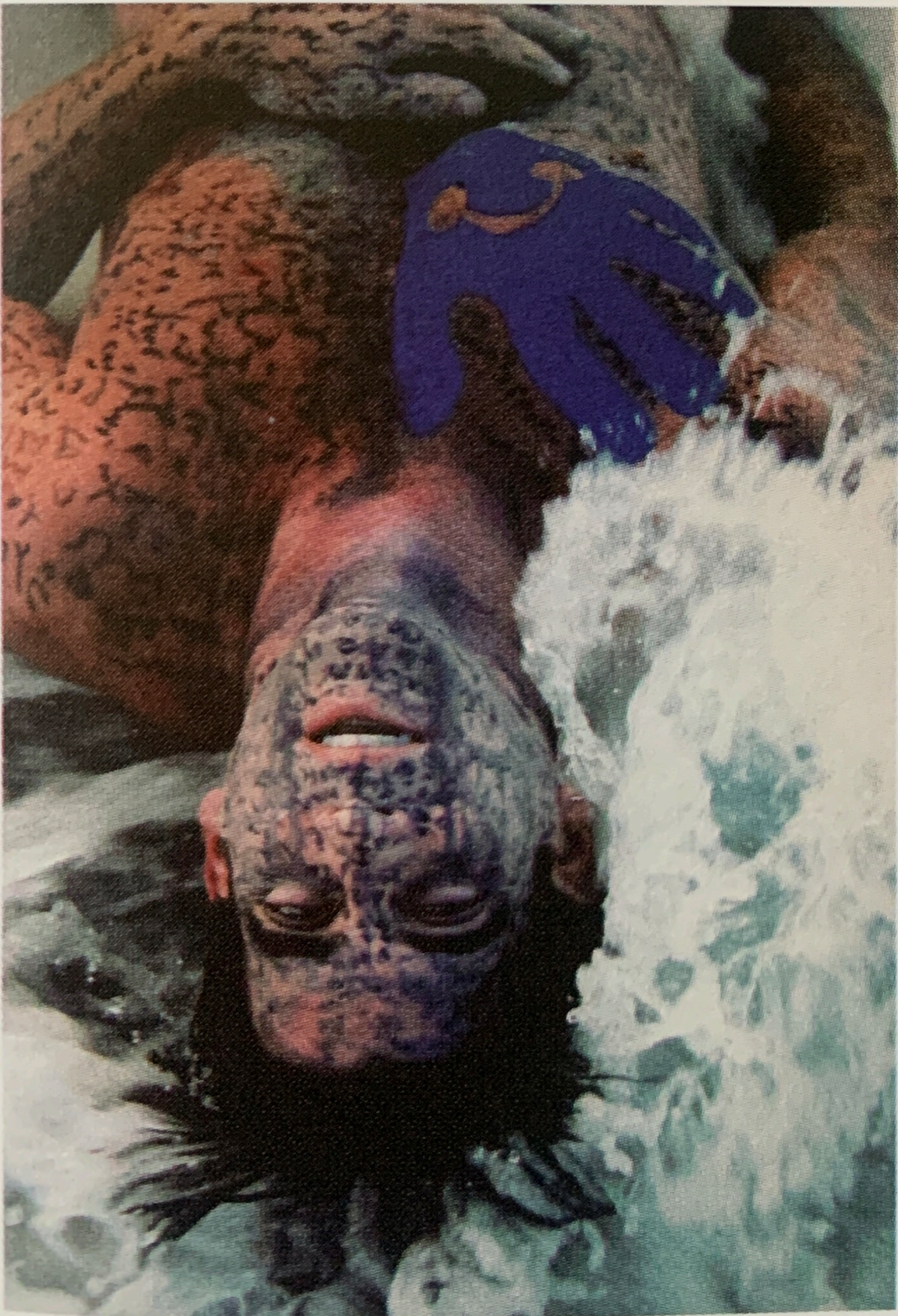
#4 *The Mockingbird*, (from *Interventions in Wynwood II series*), Metallic Lambda print, Edition 2/3, 17x19, 2003



1.



2.



3.



4.

NO COUNTRY IS AN ISLAND:

ISSUES OF FREEDOM AND DIASPORA IN CARIBBEAN
(AMERICAN) ART

THE QUESTION OF FREEDOM SATURATES THE AIR OVER THE CARIBBEAN ISLANDS LIKE BRINE. It isn't always pleasant or heroic, but it gets stirred up with the grit of daily life—with art and politics, with puzzles of identity and spirituality, and with work and love. The question of freedom is a rubric for just so many questions about how to live in a post-colonial world, especially in one surrounded by a sea that envelops its islands even as it isolates them from one another. Freedom, as a question, stems from bondage, as a practice. It is a problem of being addressed to the future, and that from within the predicament of the past, which always strays unflinchingly into the present.

So this large and quotidian question poses a perennial problem. And this problem issues from the historical fact of ethnic deracination and the deployment of human capital in colonial labor markets. In this way the question of freedom travels necessarily with diasporic populations, which, in this case, were channeled into the region primarily from West Africa, China, and India. But it also travels with the colonizers and is revisited necessarily by indigenous populations under the experience of colonialism. The question continues to circulate from age to age: from that of colonialism to imperialism and to the present era of globalization—the untrammelled Western expansion of markets and culture via hegemonic pressures.

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main... Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

These words come from poet John Donne's Meditation XVII, "Devotion upon Emergent Occasions." They remind us that in life and death we are all related. They may also speak to the conscience of a once Catholic poet forced into the Anglican service in an age of budding European imperialism.

Another order of “emergent occasion,” relevant to the Caribbean, is identified by José Martí, the New York-based, exiled Cuban poet and revolutionary, who became an ardent critic of U.S. imperialism. He argued for a pan-American unity, he called *nuestra América*, with which to defend against U.S. encroachment in the Caribbean and Latin America. Martí made no essentialist distinction between the islands and the continent. They are pieces together. Their shared history of colonial rule, forced labor, and the extraction of natural resources and material wealth renders them all a part of the main. What uniquely characterizes “our America,” according to Martí, is its *mestizaje*—its ethnic hybridity—initially of indigenous American and European populations, followed by African and Asian importations. José Vasconcelos, the Mexican philosopher, would later dub this special case of emergent occasions the *cosmic race*. For these reasons, these intermingled histories, personal and ethnic identity have fallen more into question in the Americas than they have in other parts of the world—though the world is reluctantly catching up in this confusion.

The artists in *No Country is an Island* confront the question of freedom in its various guises and as these are handed down to them from the facts of national independence and the consequential hemispheric pressure they feel emanating from the North. That tension has its allure. Many have been drawn to the North. Some of the artists in this exhibition treat the realities of living a hybrid cultural identity in the United States. Others offer alternatives to the pictorial clichés of Hollywood and the tourism industry.

For several of the artists the function of ritual serves as a spiritually and culturally grounding exercise. Their work engages ritual in imagining new relationships between the body and the soil: hypothesizing the body’s variable locations in relation to the land from which it materially and spiritually emerges. In many instances, the art-making process itself becomes another event in the self-grounding performance of ritual—another occasion among the rites of self-emergence.

Maybe Vasconcelos was right that in the Americas we are witnessing the future of mankind—at least to the extent that we are witness to the negotiations made in its name, in the name of mixing it up. It is to the artists we turn for the most vivid impressions of such brave and mundane futures.

Jorge Daniel Veneciano

Director, Paul Robeson Gallery; Rutgers University, Newark

NO COUNTRY IS AN ISLAND:

ISSUES OF FREEDOM AND DIASPORA IN CARIBBEAN ART

SEPTEMBER 12 THROUGH OCTOBER 20, 2005

RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE GALLERY

OPENING RECEPTION SEPTEMBER 16, 2005

ARTISTS TALK 5:30-6:30PM IN THE COLLEGE ATRIUM

RECEPTION 6:30-8:00PM

CURATED BY Yoland Skeete of Sumei Art Center

COORDINATED BY Donna Stackhouse

EXHIBITING ARTISTS:

MANUEL ACEVEDO	Puerto Rico
ELIA ALBA	Dominican Republic
NICOLE AWAI	Trinidad
CARLOS BETANCOURT	Puerto Rico
ALBERT CHONG	Jamaica
CHRIS COZIER	Trinidad
ANDRES MONTALVAN CUELLER	Cuba
RICHARD FUNG	Trinidad
JESUS RIVERA	Cuba
YASMIN SPIRO	Jamaica
GELSY VERNA	Haiti

Ross Bleckner, Bob Colacello, Francisco Costa, Ariel Foxman,
Donna Karan, Martha Nelson, and Isabel Rattazzi welcome you to the

15th ANNUAL HOLIDAY DINNER

honoring Spyros Niarchos, Co-President, and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation

Benefitting the AIDS Community Research Initiative of America (ACRIA)

C'MON



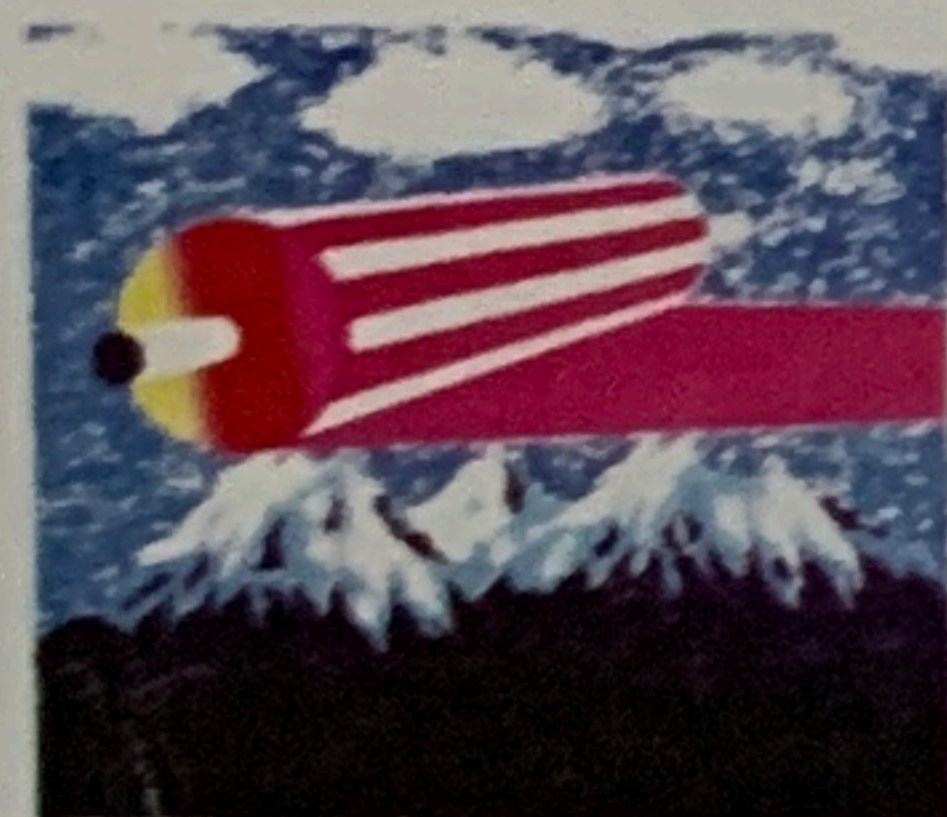
Herb Ritts, (1952 – 2002)

Duo II, Los Angeles 1990
Platinum print
18 x 22 inches
From the proposed edition of 25 plus 3 AP's, only 25 prints were realized.
Edition number: 2/25, Signed by the artist
© Herb Ritts Foundation
Retail value: \$6,000; Bidding Starts: \$3,000
BUY IT NOW: \$5,800



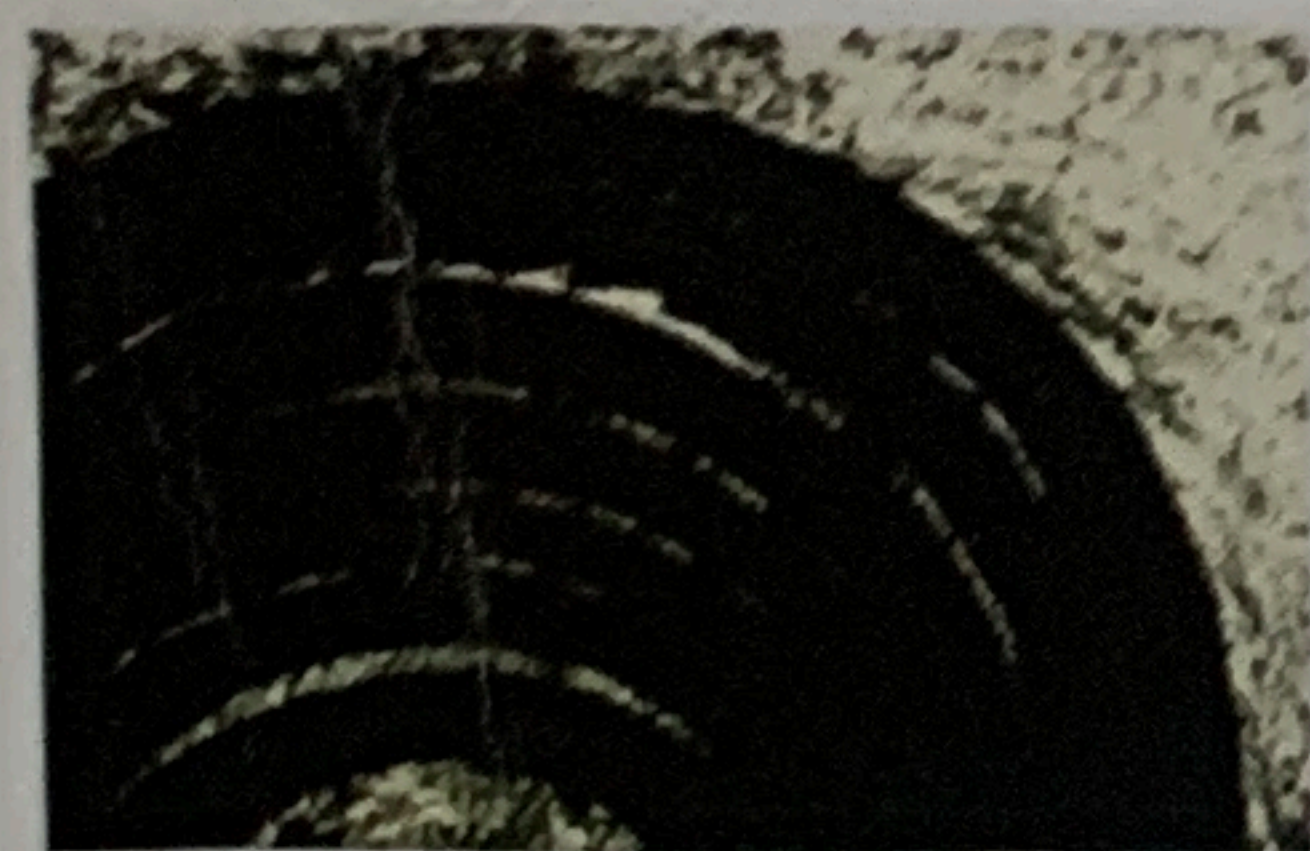
Herb Ritts, (1952 – 2002)

Pee Wee Herman on Roof, Hollywood 1987
Gelatin Silver print
20 x 16 inches
From the proposed edition of 25 plus 3 AP's, only 17 prints were realized.
Edition number: 7/25, Signed by the artist
© Herb Ritts Foundation
Retail value: \$5,000; Bidding Starts: \$2,500
BUY IT NOW: \$4,800



James Rosenquist

Gallery: Aquavella
Discover Graphics, 1994
8-color lithograph
33 1/2 x 38 inches
Edition: 75
Retail Value: \$2,900; Bidding Starts: \$1,400
BUY IT NOW: \$2,500



Richard Serra

Paths and Edges #2, 2007
1-color etching
25 3/4 x 39 1/4 inches
Edition: 60, This is an SP
Courtesy of the artist
Retail value: \$8,500; Bidding starts: \$4,000
BUY IT NOW: \$7,500



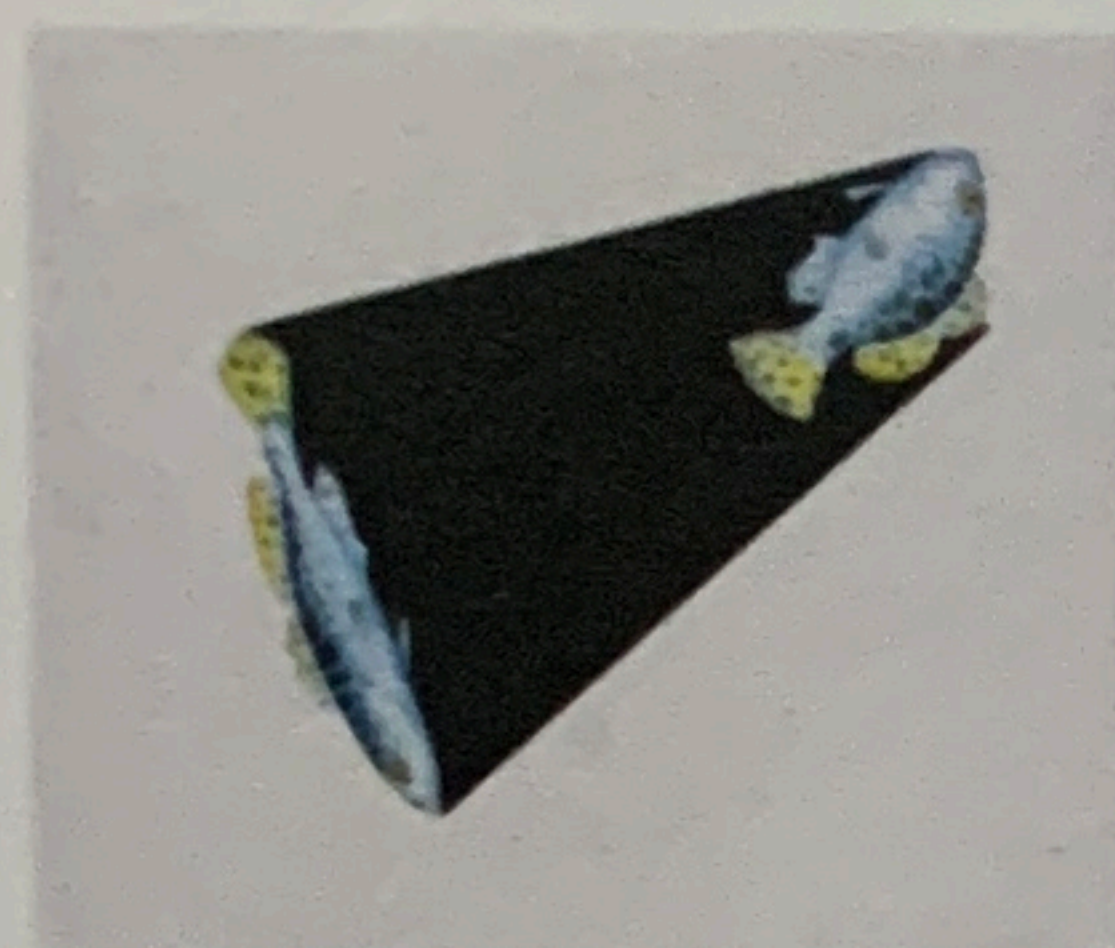
Cary Smith

Gallery: Feature Inc.
Splat #16 (red), 2010
Colored pencil on hot press watercolor paper
6 1/2 x 6 1/2 inches
Unique
Courtesy of the artist and Feature Inc. NY
Retail Value: \$1,500; Bidding Starts at: \$500
BUY IT NOW: \$1,300



Smythson

Cassis Nancy Bag with Alligator Clasp
Exquisite, timelessly chic Leather with Alligator
Limited Edition
Courtesy of Smythson
Retail Value: \$2,250; Bidding Starts: \$1,300
BUY IT NOW: \$2,100



Ben Snead

Gallery: Feature Inc.
Untitled, 2010
Colored pencil on paper
14 x 17 inches
Unique
Courtesy of the artist and Feature Inc. NY
Retail Value: \$2,000; Bidding Starts at: \$500
BUY IT NOW: \$1,800



Paul Solberg

Deep Space II
Giclée archival pigment print on Hahnemühle
mould made paper with archival pigments
24 x 36 inches
Unique
Courtesy of the Artist
Retail: \$4,500; Bidding Starts: \$1,800
BUY IT NOW: \$4,500



Pat Steir

Gallery: Pace Editions
Silver Waterfall, 2001
Screen Print
56 1/2 x 32 inches
Edition: 35
Courtesy of the Artist
Retail Value: \$5,500; Bidding Starts: \$2,800
BUY IT NOW: \$5,800



Do Ho Suh

Gallery: Lehmann Maupin
Karma
Hand applied paint onto print
16 x 20 inches
Unique
Courtesy of Stephen Karpiak
Retail Value: \$1,800; Bidding Starts: \$900
BUY IT NOW: \$1,600



Donald Sultan

Black Poppies, April 25, 2007
Screenprint with flocking
24 x 24 inches
Edition: 75
Courtesy of Michele & Alexander Heinrici
Retail Value: \$2,800; Bidding Starts: \$1,300
BUY IT NOW: \$2,600



Donald Sultan

Butterflies, Jan 25, 2006
20-color screenprint with over-printed flocking
38 x 38 inches
Edition: 75
Courtesy of Lococo Fine Art Publisher, St. Louis.
Retail Value: \$4,500; Bidding Starts: \$2,200
BUY IT NOW: \$4,000



Tom of Finland

Gallery: Feature Inc.
Untitled, (preliminary drawing)
Graphite on paper
11 3/4 x 8 1/4 inches
Unique
Courtesy of the Tom of Finland Foundation, LA
and Feature Inc., NY
Certificate of authenticity available upon purchase
Retail Value: \$6,500; Bidding Starts at: \$3,500
BUY IT NOW: \$6,800



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at Ambergris Cay**

Luxury Vacation
Three nights accommodation on Ambergris Cay
in either an Oceanfront bungalow or a luxury
handcrafted Oceanfront Safari tent; Private
flight between Turks & Caicos Sporting Club at
Ambergris Cay and Providenciales, TCI. \$1,750



William Wegman

Gallery: Senior & Shopmaker
Foot Field, 2006
Pigment Print
24 x 30 inches
Edition: 5/15
Courtesy of the artist
Retail Value: \$5,700; Bidding Starts: \$2,500
BUY IT NOW: \$5,400



James Weingrod

Star Struck, 2010
Acrylic urethane on clay board
18 x 24 inches
Unique
Courtesy of the artist
Retail Value: \$1,400; Bidding Starts at: \$700
BUY IT NOW: \$1,500



William Wood

Untitled, 2010
Oil on canvas, 4 works
12 x 9 inches, each
Unique
Courtesy of the artist
Retail Value: \$2,800; Bidding Starts: \$1,200
BUY IT NOW: \$2,100



B. Wurtz

Gallery: Feature Inc.
Untitled (life painting), 1990
Acrylic paint on paper
12 1/4 x 9 inches
Unique
Courtesy of the artist and Feature Inc. NY
Retail Value: \$1,500; Bidding Starts at: \$500
BUY IT NOW: \$1,300