

Alexander Lee
Recitations from the Great Fish Changing Skies

September 6 – October 4, 2008

Kinkead Contemporary is proud to announce **Alexander Lee: *Recitations from The Great Fish Changing Skies***, an exhibition of sculptures and drawings by New York artist Alexander Lee, his second solo exhibition at the gallery.

In this new installment, Lee transforms the gallery into a space that invites the viewer to witness the epic and macabre myth of the creation of a volcanic island. This fable tells of a rebellious young maiden who defied the gods' restrictions by swimming in a river near her home, only to be swallowed by a wondrous eel. Lee's sculptures delve into the aftermath of this episode and the subsequent chain of events that culminated into the creation of the island of Tahiti. Further accounts and interpretations of the myth put forth the story of a clan of villagers exiling themselves from the highly religious and regimented life at *Opoa* (island of Raiatea, seat of Polynesian civilization) and their journey on the open seas on double canoes, guided by stars, to inhabit *Tahiti-manahune*, plebeian Tahiti.

While Lee's driving narrative is firmly planted in Tahitian lore, his interest lies in the anthropic process and the cultural construction of the *Other* as it manifests in what the artist refers to as "an ecology of carnivorous relationships." The exhibition's central sculpture, titled ***The Great Fish Changing Skies***, is comprised of an erupting mushroom cloud - referring to the island's recent past as France's nuclear testing ground, the ensuing local economical boom, and more broadly the military-industrial-complex and its recent global aftermaths. The lower component of the sculpture, cast in resin and black sand, consists of clashing tectonic plates in the shape of mountain peaks that form both the base for the volcanic/nuclear eruption, and the transforming body of the mythical fish. A third component, in the shape of a submarine spill, gives direction to the creature in transformation, announcing the development of species. Finally, hanging in mid-air, a series of sculptures in the shape of stars draw a trajectory between the body of the fish and the visual recitation of its journey.

In addition to sculptures, Lee will be showing for the first time a series of drawings on paper that trace an arc for his sculpture's fantastical journey. At times loose and poetically fragile, and other times more topographically determined, they broaden Lee's practice and give pendant to the physicality of his sculptures.

Alexander Lee was born in Stockton, CA and grew up in Tahiti, French Polynesia. He received his MFA from Columbia University and an MPS from New York University. Lee's work has appeared in numerous solo and group exhibitions throughout the U.S. and Europe. He has recently been awarded a fellowship at the RBPMW in New York.

Kinkead Contemporary is a contemporary art gallery dedicated to emerging artists. Founded by John Kinkead, the gallery's mission is to introduce new voices through an ambitious series of solo and curated group exhibitions.

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