

Ken Solomon: *Still Moving* – video installation and drawings

October 20 – November 26, 2005

Opening: Thursday October 20, from 6 to 8pm

Josee Bienvenu Gallery is pleased to present *Still Moving*-, Ken Solomon's first one-person exhibition. The show consists of two video installations and a group of new drawings.

Ken Solomon's work explores the limitless range of interpretation of the same thing. Many faces: one wig was the basic idea behind *The Wig Project*. Over the last 4 years, through a relentless grass roots ad campaign, Ken Solomon has solicited complete strangers to model in the exact same (sanitized) wig for a headshot. 1,431 people ended up venturing to his studio to be photographed in 35 mm film, after seeing the numerous "I need Volunteers" posters of Photoshop manipulated pop icons (Where's Waldo, the Brady Bunch or Britney Spears) plastered around Brooklyn. The resulting photographs pinned to the walls of the studio in a tight grid were used to create the subsequent 10 minutes three-channel video installation. The video documents the multitude of reactions of hundreds of characters unified behind the same Afro wig and mug shot format. Images shift from one face to another, a still portrait becomes progressively animated, faces appear and disappear to the rhythm of the recording of hundreds of phone messages people left in response to *The Wig Project* ad campaign.

Makedown is a 13-minute one-channel video projection that explores the multitude of variations of a single face through a slowly revealing self-portrait. From a monochromatic white screen, a face progressively draws itself on the screen and morphs into various stages. *Makedown* evokes a strip tease of art history in fast motion. From Ryman to Van Gogh back to Leonardo, jumping to Klimt, Pissarro, Chuck Close, to what could be the cover of a hip hop album when we finally get to the artist's bare face.

A performance aspect omnipresent in the videos is also at the core of Ken Solomon's stamp drawings. His meticulous gouache paintings and colored pencil drawings of Love, Flag, Birds and Flowers Stamps on envelopes are posted from various locations incurring the risk of never reaching their destination. For *Dependence Day*, strangers and acquaintances in every single state of America agreed to mail him back for the 4th of July, a drawing he had previously sent them. The resulting work, a giant flag stamp composed of 48 envelopes and two empty spaces measures a certain state of reliability in the Union.

Ken Solomon was born in 1971. He lives and works in Brooklyn, NY. His work was included in various group shows around the United States. He also in collaboration with Marco Maggi were shown at the Fifth Gwangju Biennial in Korea; the Centro Colombo Americano in Bogotá, Columbia and will be on view at the RISD Museum in December. In 2005, a group of his stamp drawings entered the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York.