



JENKINS JOHNSON GALLERY

STORIES TODAY

September 2 – October 30, 2010

Jenkins Johnson Gallery
464 Sutter Street
San Francisco, CA 94108
T: (415) 677.0770
F: (415) 677.0780
sf@jenkinsjohnsongallery.com
www.jenkinsjohnsongallery.com



Khalif Kelly, *Threshold*, 2009
oil on canvas, 78 x 90 inches



Lisa Schmaltz, *Were Gonna Need A Bigger Doily*
2010, cut paper and coffee, 64 x 48 inches

Jenkins Johnson Gallery, San Francisco announces **Stories Today**, a three person exhibition featuring works by **Khalif Kelly** and **Lisa Schmaltz**. An opening reception for the exhibition will be held Thursday, September 2nd, 2010, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

Stories Today, brings together two eminent artists who approach tradition and culture through the diverse mediums of sewn paper quilts and painting revealing deeper understandings of history, feminism, race, youth, and identity. Each artist illustrates a unique story of personal and cultural experience with a universal appeal, leaving the viewer to determine his or her own narrative and conclusion.

Khalif Kelly's paintings exhibit an eccentric and imaginative style. His application of bright, flat colors, geometric shapes, and figurative narratives harkens to Jacob Lawrence while also suggesting inspirations from comic strips, old master paintings, and the stop motion animation of George Pal. His work is charged with storylines that center around racial stereotypes and personal archetypes, in which the central character and hero is played by a Picaninny; a derogatory term referring to a black child or a caricature of one. The figures are painted with pixilated edges, as if emitted from a 1980s video game, in which the viewer becomes the gamer. The overall effect evokes a nostalgic childhood experience, in which Kelly takes you on a fresh mythical journey that is fascinatingly playful yet thoughtfully suspenseful. The young Kelly received his MFA from the Yale School of Art, he recently completed an Artist in-Residence at The Studio Museum in Harlem and a solo exhibition at the Santa Monica Museum of Art.

Drawing upon her Southern roots, **Lisa Schmaltz** constructs intricate, coffee-stained paper quilts; incorporating familial quilt and lace patterns, Schmaltz hand-dyes the paper quilts, further referencing traditional domestic techniques. The coffee-stained paper conjures a charred vintage appearance while the delicate designs appear at once ephemeral and antique, stained with age. The quilts serve as contemporary relics of a place and time when life at home and tradition were principal. The artist's application of organic materials is directly connected to the story they tell of memory, life, family, death, motherhood, and hospitality. Schmaltz is an emerging artist who recently graduated from the San Francisco Fine Arts Institute and currently lives and works in San Francisco.

Kelly and Schmaltz all emit a distinctive voice through their respective mediums and incorporate techniques, traditions, and subject matter in their work, which is rooted in an oral cultural history rich with memory and stories. Their work traces the past and looks to the future with a harmonious duality in time, place, and identity.