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PAUL CHAN

"My Birds...Trash...The Future"

October 7 - November 13, 2004

The Greene Naftali Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by Paul Chan, entitled *My Birds... Trash... the Future*, opening Thursday, October 7, 2004. In this, his debut solo show, Paul Chan will present a new double-channel digital installation, a drawing installation, and large-format digital prints. The digital animation uses the formal structure of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and sections of the Bible to explore the anxiety of belief and the interplay between cruelty and compassion in the (near) future.

The piece is inspired by the conflation of the two texts, both of which push the boundaries of what it means to believe something – anything - to a degree that the belief becomes mutated by the burden placed on it by those who believe. Projected on the front and back of a hanging screen, the seventeen-minute computer animation reflects this conflation. The "front" animation is essentially the landscape from *Godot*, while the "back" is Chan's imagined landscape of *Revelations*, tying two texts, two angles, into one imaginary scene.

Rapper Christopher Wallace *aka* Biggie Smalls and Pier Pasolini, two artists and victims of senseless violence, inhabit this barren world. In addition, twenty birds derived from the Book of Leviticus, and one bat, populate the scene. According to the Bible, these birds were considered unclean, barred from touch and company by humans, and also not to be used as food. Together they are characterized as "untouchable," man and bird alike. In the seven scenes which transpire, these protagonists all act as "human", with an emphasis on the play between compassion and power, while other human characters are portrayed as animals, barbarians even.

The use of hip-hop cell phone rings as a soundtrack adds contemporary resonance to this work, whose references span William Blake, Rothko, and Goya, and whose images have been derived from news photography and Audubon Society catalogs alike.

Chan's work is now on view at the Carnegie International, in Pittsburg, PA. He received his MFA from Bard in 2002, and has lectured extensively in both political and creative arenas. Chan also recently designed the People's Guide to the RNC.