

Mores McWreath

Curated by Andrea Zittel

November 13, 2009 – January 9, 2010

(Opening reception Thursday, November 13, 6:00 – 8:00pm)

“*McWreath points to a world in which meaningful relationships to labor, other people or self-empowerment can easily be relinquished, in exchange for the ever evasive fulfillment promised by a continual consumption of commodities.*”

—Andrea Zittel

Occupying a world between the cerebral and the grotesque, the multimedia work of New York-based artist, Mores McWreath, examines notions of freedom, choice and materialism. McWreath appropriates commercial slogans, pop music lyrics, and other commonplace, confrontational sources of American consumerist culture and joins them together, not only mimicking the information overload with which we are faced daily, but underlining the fragmented, senseless nature that media can achieve in contemporary culture. His chosen format mirrors the traditional method of advertising – brief and attention-grabbing. Placed together in seemingly inconsequential sequences, the viewer is led to view human existence through a construed mental play-back perspective, one imbued with dark humor and oftentimes a blurred sense of meaning. Leaving the viewer to actively pursue understanding of and meaning in the information presented, McWreath challenges the viewer to rise above passive observation to critical self analysis.



Remain, 2009
High definition digital video
6 minutes

McWreath’s suburban childhood home of Westlake, Ohio has left the greatest impression on him and it is this for which his on-screen alter ego, Will Westlake, is named. Dominating his most recent work, Will Westlake is the volatile, fickle, über consumer. Constantly kicking, screaming and antagonizing, mostly in commercial spots for chain restaurants and clothing stores, Westlake exudes the token arrogant masculine aura with which American mainstream culture has always had a love-hate relationship. *Westlake* is not a foil to

McWreath’s own self, rather he serves as the artist’s acknowledgement of his own struggles and failures to resist the allure of capitalism. *The Bud, The Seed, The Egg* (2008, left), features multiple vignettes of Will Westlake caged in a suffocating, bland corporate



The Bud, The Seed, The Egg, 2008
Digital video, 20 minutes

office space. Each varies radically regarding topic – from reciting the ridiculous amounts of toothpaste options at Target to singing the theme song of the television show, *Growing Pains*. His newest video, *Remain* (2009, top right), uses a deserted, post-apocalyptic scene as its backdrop and sets Will Westlake to providing the viewer with an interchangeable set of platitudes and enigmatic statements such as “Your instincts are wrong” and “Fashion is all about self expression.” In conjunction with the large, empty space, and Westlake’s obvious isolation, it appears as if Will Westlake may even be reflecting on himself.

On view at CUE Art Foundation, McWreath’s first solo show in New York, will be an installation of his most recent video and sculptural work, including a large-scale projection of *Remain*.

(More, over)

For additional information, please contact Ryan Thomas, Programs Coordinator, CUE Art Foundation, 212-206-3583, or email ryan.thomas@cueartfoundation.org

Free catalogues available.

ARTIST'S BIO:

Mores McWreath was born in Washington, PA in 1980 and grew up in ten different cities scattered throughout the South and Midwest. He received a BFA from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York and an MFA from the University of Southern California Roski School of Fine Arts in Los Angeles. He attended the Whitney Museum of American Art Independent Study Program in 2008-2009. Recent group exhibitions include: *Theoretical Practice* at the International Studio and Curatorial Program, New York, 2009; *Worlds Away: New Suburban Landscapes* at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 2008; *End-Times* at the Lasso Gallery at the Butcher Shop, Chicago, 2007; *Ghosts of Presence: International Emerging Artists' Video* at the Art Gallery of York University, Toronto, 2007; and *Flex Your Textiles* at John Connelly Presents, New York, 2006. His work has been screened in film festivals both nationally and internationally, including the Athens International Film and Video Festival and the Jakarta International Video Festival. He currently teaches at the Cooper Union. McWreath's exhibition at CUE Art Foundation marks his first solo show in New York.

About CUE:

CUE Art Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit forum for contemporary art and cultural exchange that provides opportunities and resources for under-recognized artists. We value the astonishing diversity of creativity that artists provide and the importance of their activity in the social context of the city.

CUE provides artists, students, scholars and art professionals resources at many stages of their careers and creative lives. Our programs include exhibitions, studio residencies, publications, professional development seminars, educational outreach, symposia, readings, concerts and performances. Since 2002, we have operated from our 4,500 square foot storefront venue in the heart of New York's Chelsea Arts District.

CUE exhibiting artists are chosen by their peers and a rotating group of advisors and curators from across the country. This pluralistic process ensures that CUE consistently offers diverse viewpoints from multiple disciplines of artistic practice.

Simply put, we give artists their CUE to take center stage in the challenging world of art.

Monitors for this exhibition generously loaned by: **Artists Space**

Major program support is provided by The Accademia Charitable Foundation, Ltd., The Viking Foundation, Agnes Gund and Daniel Shapiro, The Pollock-Krasner Foundation, The Greenwall Foundation, The Greenwich Collection Ltd., The Foundation for Contemporary Arts, The Joan Mitchell Foundation, Milton & Sally Avery Arts Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, William Talbot Hillman Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and New York State Council on the Arts (a State Agency).

