

REDCAT

ROY AND EDNA DISNEY/CALARTS THEATER **NEWS RELEASE**

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GEOFFREY FARMER: *LET'S MAKE THE WATER TURN BLACK*



Exhibition dates: February 18 – April 10, 2011
Opening reception: Sunday, March 5 at 6–9pm

REDCAT is pleased to present the first solo exhibition in Los Angeles by Vancouver-based artist Geoffrey Farmer, curated by REDCAT assistant curator Aram Moshayedi.

Regarded internationally for his cumulative, research-based projects, Farmer creates context-specific sculptural works that grapple with his longstanding interest in the relationship between art objects and theories of drama and dramatization. In doing so, Farmer mines a diverse array of literary and artistic histories to reveal the pervasiveness of theatricality within cultural experience. Rather than adhere to the convention of exhibitions as static displays, Farmer reconstitutes the gallery space as a site for activity, movement, alteration and accumulation.

For this exhibition, Farmer transforms the Gallery at REDCAT into both studio workshop and theatrical space where an assembly of performers and mechanized objects act out a scripted narrative in the form of a sculptural tableau. Starting mid-February, Farmer is in residence to work on-site and create a new site-specific "sculpture play" titled *Let's Make the Water Turn Black* in response to the region's social history and Los Angeles' influence on the counter-cultural movement. The exhibition begins on February 18 with a series of discrete installations on an architectural facade built to separate the central

gallery from the REDCAT lobby. These revolving installations act as a prelude to the first public presentation of Farmer's sculpture play on March 5, 2011, when visitors are invited to enter the central gallery space for the first time.

Let's Make the Water Turn Black borrows its title from a song released in 1968 by The Mothers of Invention, a band led by Frank Zappa that embodied the cultural spirit of the era in Los Angeles. Farmer's installation uses the song as a starting point for a new narrative that casts a recreated copy of Isamu Noguchi's monumental sculpture *To the Issei* (1983), located in the nearby plaza of the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center complex in Little Tokyo, as the central protagonist. A large platform consumes the gallery and acts as a stage for kinetic sculptures to perform a script based on themes adapted from traditional Japanese theater and the history of the counter-cultural movement in Los Angeles. Farmer's interest in Kabuki's "off-kilter" acting style is brought into focus around a similar off-balance approach that defined the history of experimentation with kinetic art, Happenings, and the ethos of art-making in the 1960s and 70s. *Let's Make the Water Turn Black* uses found and composed objects, props, theatrical lighting and recorded sound to find formal similarities in otherwise disparate cultural histories.

Geoffrey Farmer (b. 1967) currently lives and works in Vancouver, British Columbia. Recent solo exhibitions have taken place at the Walter Phillips Gallery, the Banff Centre; the Museo Experimental El Eco, Mexico City; Catriona Jeffries, Vancouver; Witte de With, Rotterdam; the Drawing Room, London; and the Power Plant Gallery, Toronto. In 2008, a mid-career retrospective of Farmer's work was mounted at the Mus-ée d'art contemporain in Montreal. Notable group exhibitions include *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* at CCA Wattis Institute of Contemporary Art, San Francisco; *The World as a Stage* at Tate Modern, London and the ICA Boston; as well as the 2008 Brussels Biennial and the 2008 Sydney Biennale. His first solo exhibition in the United States opens February 2011 at Casey Kaplan in New York. Farmer will also participate in this year's Istanbul Biennial and will have a major solo exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery, Canada in 2013.

This exhibition is funded in part with generous support of the Audain Foundation.

Special thanks to Catriona Jeffries, Casey Kaplan and Presentation House Gallery, Vancouver.

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GALLERY AT REDCAT

Gallery at REDCAT aims to support, present, commission and nurture new creative insights through dynamic projects and challenging ideas. The Gallery presents five exhibitions every year, often of newly commissioned work that represents the artist's first major presentation in the U.S. or Los Angeles. The Gallery also maintains an active publishing program producing as many as two major monographs per year. Proceeding from the geographic and cultural specificities of Los Angeles, its program emphasizes artistic production of the Pacific Rim--namely Mexico, Central and South America and Asia--as regions that are of vital significance to California. The Gallery aims to facilitate dialogue between local and international artists contributing to a greater understanding of the social, political and cultural contexts that inform contemporary artistic practice.

Gallery at REDCAT is open Tuesdays through Sundays from noon to 6:00pm or until intermission. It is closed Monday and major holidays. Admission to the Gallery at

REDCAT is always free.

REDCAT is located at the corner of W. 2nd and Hope Streets, inside the Walt Disney Concert Hall complex in downtown Los Angeles (631 West 2nd Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012).

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REDCAT is an interdisciplinary contemporary arts center for innovative visual, performing and media arts located in downtown Los Angeles inside the Walt Disney Concert Hall complex. Through performances, exhibitions, screenings, and literary events, REDCAT introduces diverse audiences, students and artists to the most influential developments in the arts from around the world, and gives artists in this region the creative support they need to achieve national and international stature. REDCAT continues the tradition of the California Institute of the Arts, its parent organization, by encouraging experimentation, discovery and lively civic discourse. For more information, visit www.redcat.org.

REDCAT 2010-11 Season Sponsors include media sponsors Los Angeles Times and KCRW, official hotel sponsor The Standard Hotel Downtown and official piano of REDCAT Yamaha. Full REDCAT Acknowledgments can be found online at www.redcat.org/acknowledgments.

Image caption: Geoffrey Farmer, "God's Dice," 2010. Installation view at the Walter Phillips Gallery, The Banff Centre. Courtesy the artist; Catriona Jeffries, Vancouver; and Casey Kaplan, New York.

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