

GALLERY 1: Gibb Slife—*The New Convolution*

GALLERY 2: Mel Prest—*Pacific Transmissions*

ON VIEW: November 17, 2006–January 6, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Branch Gallery is pleased to present a solo exhibition by Brooklyn artist Gibb Slife. Fresh off the heels of group shows at both D’Amelio Terras and White Columns in New York City, Slife presents us with new paintings as well as an installation of six silk-screened mirrors titled *Slow Burn*. Each work seeks to create a singular image—bold, autonomous, and often monumental. From royal images of bejeweled crowns and scepters to fringed canvas “flags” of American iconography, the work is painterly and uniquely masculine. With *Slow Burn*, Slife takes a more graphic approach and re-arranges 100 years of front page headlines. With the use of mirror he forces the viewer to confront the way we read the news and absorb the facts presented to us as truth.

Born in Ohio but raised in Atlanta, Georgia, Slife headed north to study at the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, RI. Slife has exhibited in group shows with Branch Gallery and participated at both *New Contemporaries*, Art Cologne (Germany), and the NADA Art Fair (Miami). His work has been also been exhibited at: Galerie Pixi (Paris), Kontiki-Leo Keonig project space (Brooklyn), 96 Gillespie (London), and Galerie Edward Mitterand (Geneva).

This is the first exhibition of San Francisco artist Mel Prest at Branch Gallery. Using simple forms and vibrant colors, Prest creates painted panels that are both formal and architectural. The combination of lines and color force the viewer to focus and re-focus the eye, creating both an emotional and physical tension. Prest writes that she is influenced by Japanese gardens of rock, moss, raked sand, Tibetan mandalas, and victorian labyrinths as tools of contemplation. An inspirational trip to Japan is referenced in titles such as *Furisode* (a ceremonial kimono worn by girls on their 20th birthday, to signify their coming of age), and *Nihongo* (the Japanese word for the Japanese language). A new series of drawings shows the artist layering lines of gouache on paper into frantic and beautiful web-like grids. In contrast to the minimal paintings these works were inspired by the translation of Led Zeppelin lyrics.

Prest received her BFA in Painting from Rhode Island School of Design and her MFA from Mills College in Oakland, CA. Prest was also an affiliate artist-in-residence at the Headlands Center for the Arts from 2002–2005. Her work is represented by Gregory Lind Gallery in San Francisco.

Gallery Hours: Wed–Sat 12–6 or by appt.

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