

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Los Angeles, CA
October 27, 2008

NEW GALLERY OPENS IN CHINATOWN

Charlie James Gallery, at 975 Chung King Road, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Inaugural Group Exhibition:

***The Western Front* - featuring paintings and sculptures by Bay Area artists Ray Beldner, Kara Maria, and Packard Jennings**

Dates: November 15, 2008 – Jan 3, 2009

Artist's Reception: Saturday, November 15, 2008 6-9pm at the gallery



Kara Maria

Ray Beldner

Packard Jennings

Charlie James Gallery announces its inaugural exhibition with “The Western Front”: a group show featuring selected works by Bay Area artists Ray Beldner, Kara Maria, and Packard Jennings. The exhibition dates are November 15, 2008 – January 3, 2009. An opening reception for the artists is Saturday, November 15, 2008 from 6-9pm at the gallery. With *The Western Front*, the Charlie James Gallery makes its introduction to the Los Angeles contemporary art community, and declares its post-Pop, Conceptual emphasis.

Ray Beldner’s body of work frequently explores the utility of art in contemporary culture through the uses of appropriation. In *The Western Front*, we sample Beldner’s Counterfeit series, his ongoing meditation on the relationships between art and commerce and between authorship and appropriation. Beldner received a Bachelors of Fine Arts from the San Francisco Art Institute and a Masters of Fine Arts from Mills College. In 2009, his work will be included in *Inventing Marcel Duchamp: The Dynamics of Portraiture* at the National Portrait Gallery, Washington D. C. His work resides in the permanent collections of the de Young Museum, San Francisco; the San Jose Museum of Art; the Oakland Art Museum; the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington D.C.; the United States Federal Reserve Board, Washington D.C., among others.

Kara Maria’s abstract compositions contain arrays of charged figural elements that together question powerful forces at work in our culture today. Maria’s work belongs to the continuum of war painting, as her compositions conflate war, petro-commerce, and debased sexuality as evidence of, and motive forces in, our arrival at dystopia. Maria received both BFA and MFA degrees from the University of California at Berkeley. Her work has been included in group exhibitions at the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University, the Contemporary Arts Museums, Houston, and the Orange County Center for Contemporary Arts. She has garnered critical attention in the *Los Angeles Times*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and *Art in America*.

Packard Jennings's work constitutes a front all of its own in the ongoing war between corporate interests and human sensibilities. Using media and methods common to corporate advertising and communications, Jennings highlights corporate transgressions against public interests. In *The Western Front*, we sample a wide range of Jennings' work around public interventions, from his Business Reply series to his most recent Anarchist Action Figure work. Packard Jennings's has garnered critical attention across a variety of media, including *The New York Times*, *Artforum*, *Playboy*, and *The Washington Post*.

Image Information: Kara Maria, *The Muddiness of Right and Wrong*, Acrylic on canvas, 56"x46". Ray Beldner, *Love Can't Buy Money* (after Liechtenstein), Sewn US currency, 40" x 24". Packard Jennings, *Anarchist Action Figure*, polymer composite, 18" x 2.5" x 7.5".

What: Inaugural Group Show: *The Western Front*, featuring Bay Area artists Ray Beldner, Kara Maria, and Packard Jennings.

When: November 15, 2008 to January 3, 2009

Where: Charlie James Gallery 975 Chung King Road. Los Angeles, CA 90012

Special Events: Artists' Reception Saturday November 15 from 6-9pm

About Charlie James Gallery: Charlie James Gallery formed in 2008 in Seattle, WA and is having its debut in Chinatown, downtown Los Angeles in November of 2008. The gallery will exhibit emerging and mid-career artists with post-Pop, Conceptual areas of focus. Housed in a 1947 Chinatown manufacturing building (sweatshop), and newly redesigned by Dane Johnson and Manuel Bonilla, the gallery is situated amidst numerous other contemporary art galleries of strong reputation. The gallery is open Wednesday to Saturday from 12-6. For more information please visit www.cjamesgallery.com or email info@cjamesgallery.com.

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