

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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Charlie James Gallery is pleased to present the exhibition:

**NERY GABRIEL LEMUS – *BLACK IS BROWN AND BROWN IS BEAUTIFUL***

**JULY 24 THRU AUGUST 21, 2010**

**ARTIST'S RECEPTION JULY 24, 2010 FROM 6-9PM**

Charlie James Gallery is proud to present Los Angeles-based artist **Nery Gabriel Lemus** in his second LA solo show, *Black is Brown and Brown is Beautiful*. Nery is a visual artist with an activist bent, he believes in using art as a vehicle for raising awareness, initiating dialogue, and driving social change. Nery makes work of a very personal nature about his ethnic and cultural identities and the issues that inhere in his life and in the communities he inhabits. In *Black is Brown and Brown is Beautiful*, Nery revisits territory from his youth – investigating social tensions between the African-American and Latino communities in his native LA. Nery will present several large format works on paper that combine figurative images and rhetorical language that directly question viewers' positions on race relations. In a confrontational style that tonally echoes the *Calling Card* work of Adrian Piper and visually suggests the classic text and image juxtapositions of Barbara Kruger, Nery asks, "Why should we care if Will Smith is kissing Eva Mendes instead of Carrie Washington?" Seen through the lens of LACMA's 2008 "Phantom Sightings" exhibition, Nery's strident, political work resembles a postmodern version of his Chicano antecedents, reaffirming the need for activist work in contemporary Latino art.

A native of Southern California, Nery Gabriel Lemus was born in Los Angeles, in 1977. Raised from immigrant parents of Guatemala, he grew up with a bi-cultural experience, which has informed the subject matter in his practice. Within his work, he addresses themes that stem from his experiences growing up as an inner city youth, particularly cross-cultural dynamics. Lemus received his BFA at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California (2007) and his MFA at the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, California (2009). Lemus also attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine (2008).

His work has been featured in several group exhibitions including, *OZ: New Offerings From Angel City* at Museo Regional Guadalajara in Jalisco, Mexico, the *09 New Insight* exhibition, curated by Sussanne Ghez, at Art Chicago, *V Bienal Internacional de Estandartes* at CECUT in Tijuana, Mexico, *Common Ground* at the California African American Museum and *Changing Ties*, at Avenue 50 Studio. Lemus had his first solo show last year (2009) at Steve Turner Contemporary in Los Angeles.