



CONTEMPORARY IMAGES IN PRINT SINCE 1915

1614 Latimer Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

215.735.6090
215.735.5511 fax

info@printcenter.org
www.printcenter.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Ashley Peel Pinkham, 215-735-6090 x2

Abu Ghraib Detainee Interview Project: Daniel Heyman

Artist reclaims dignity for victims of abuse at Abu Ghraib

February 22 – May 5, 2007

Thursday, February 22:

Gallery Talk: Daniel Heyman, 5:00pm; Opening Reception: 5:30 – 7:30pm

PHILADELPHIA: After traveling to the Middle East to meet with victims of abuse at Abu Ghraib, Philadelphia artist **Daniel Heyman** exhibits two editions of prints on this harrowing subject. Many artists have addressed the issue of the Iraq war and the human rights abuses at Abu Ghraib. Heyman had the unique opportunity to witness interviews with former detainees of Abu Ghraib when he traveled to Amman, Jordan and Istanbul, Turkey in 2006 as part of a team pursuing a class action suit on behalf of these prisoners.

Heyman sought to create portraits of these men and women to restore their dignity and individuality to the world at large. Most Americans are familiar with the disturbing photographic images in which victims of abuse are hooded, unclothed, and anonymous. In Heyman's prints, the detainees' faces, as well as personal details emerge. In the catalog for this body of work, Philadelphia Museum of Art Associate Curator for Prints and Drawings Shelley R. Langdale writes: "...rather than portraying the former prisoners in their victimized state, ... here Heyman takes advantage of his first-hand experience to focus on them as people. He reclaims their humanity by showing them seated in suits and ties, shirtsleeves or a patterned shawl, as he encountered them when they related their testimony and spoke of their homes, families and friends." English translations of the interviews are part of the printed image.

Heyman traveled to the Middle East at the invitation of Philadelphia law firm Burke Pyle LLC to participate in interviews that the firm, along with the Center for Constitutional Rights, Human Rights Watch, and Detroit law firm Akeel and Valentine PLC, were conducting as they gathered evidence for a class action lawsuit on behalf of former detainees at Abu Ghraib. All of the Iraqi clients were tortured by their American captors and/or translators working with the Americans, and none of the clients were ever formally accused of any crime. They have all been released.

Heyman was invited to witness the interviews in a visual medium. He created portraits of the Iraqis, and in cases when the clients feared to be identified, their interviewers. Working quickly by hand in the drypoint technique on copper plates used in printmaking, Heyman not only made portraits but transcribed parts of the translated testimonies by writing backwards on the plate as they were spoken.

Sets of the prints have been purchased by the Baltimore Museum of Art, the New York Public Library, and the Yale University Gallery, among others. A print from this body of work is included alongside work by Kiki Smith, Enrique Chagoya, and Polly Apfelbaum in "New Prints/2007 Winter" at the International Print Center in New York. They will also be part of Heyman's one-person show at Kasini House in Burlington, Vermont. The AMJ Foundation and 5-County Arts Fund provided funding for these editions.

In his online journal, Heyman writes, "I think that this work concerns a wider public than just myself and those few people I know interested in my work. I feel a responsibility to the people that gave me their testimony under pretty frightening conditions (many received death threats just for talking with Americans, and ... one has been killed by an unidentified gunman) to get their first person stories out to as wide a public as possible." More journal entries and audio interviews on Heyman's experience may be found at www.danielheyman.com/news.htm.

Daniel Heyman

Daniel Heyman, painter and printmaker, holds an MFA from the University of Pennsylvania ('91) and a BA cum laude from Dartmouth College ('85). His work has been shown in solo shows in New York at the 55 Mercer Gallery (four exhibitions) and Gallery B.A.I.; in Philadelphia at the Fleisher Art Memorial, Mangel Gallery (two exhibitions), Dolan/Maxwell Gallery, and the Philadelphia Art Alliance; at the Schoolhouse Gallery in Provincetown, MA; in Los Angeles at The Advocate Gallery at the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Center; as well as in galleries in San Francisco, Hartford, and Sydney, Australia. His work is in many public and private collections including the Free Library of Philadelphia, the Hood Museum of Art, the Portland (ME) Museum of Art, the Baltimore Museum of Art, the New York Public Library, and the Yale University Gallery.

Heyman's work has been included in many group shows both regional and national including exhibitions at the International Print Center ('07), Moore College of Art ('02, '04), The Fleisher Art Memorial (Challenge Exhibition '05), The Portland (ME) Museum of Art, the Butler Institute of American Art, the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University, and Union College Art Gallery in New York State. He has been awarded an AMJ Foundation Grant ('06), an Independence Foundation Grant ('05-'06), a 5-County Arts Fund Grant ('05), a PA Council on the Arts S.O.S. Grant ('05), two Professional Development Grants from The Rhode Island School of Design ('05 and '06), a James B. Reynolds International Fellowship (France) from Dartmouth College (1986-7), and residencies at St. Michael's College, (Colchester, VT, '04), the Nagasawa Art Park Printmaking Program (Japan, '02), and the Millay Colony for the Arts (Forest Fellow, '94).

His work was featured in *Male Desire: Homosexual Desire in American Art*, (Harry Abrams, '05) written by the noted art historian Jonathan Weinberg, and has been reviewed by *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *City Paper*, *Philadelphia Weekly*, *Artblog*, *The New York Times*, *The Hartford Current*, *France Ouest*, and *The Sydney Morning Herald*, among others. He spoke on a panel titled "Artists Speak Out on Civil Liberties," that included political comedian Greg Proops and ACLU lawyer Ben Wizner, at the 2006 ACLU Membership Conference in Washington, DC. He has organized numerous group exhibitions, including "Moku Hanga and Contemporary Art" (2006) at the Centre International des Arts Contemporain in Pont Aven, France, and "Out of Nagasawa: Japanese Technique Prints from Around the World" at 55 Mercer Gallery, New York, 2003. As a teacher, Heyman has lectured widely, often giving demonstrations of Japanese printmaking techniques, and has taught at many institutions including the Rhode Island School of Design; Tyler School of Art; The Pont Aven School of Contemporary Art in Pont Aven, France; Philadelphia University; and the Fashion Institute of Technology. Heyman is fluent in French, and lives with his partner in Philadelphia. Heyman currently teaches at RISD and Swarthmore College.

The Print Center supports printmaking and photography as vital contemporary arts and encourages the appreciation of the printed image in all its forms. The Print Center presents a variety of programs for the public including 11 exhibitions annually; The Print Center Gallery Store, offering the largest and most diverse selection of contemporary prints in Philadelphia; the longest running annual international competition for prints and photographs in the country; an extensive series of continuing education programs and special events.

###