

PRESS RELEASE

Clayton Campbell: *After Abu Ghraib*

Curated by Ciara Ennis

January 22—March 27, 2009

Pitzer Art Galleries

Nichols Gallery

1050 North Mills Avenue, Claremont, CA 91711

Pitzer Art Galleries, in collaboration with Pitzer's Center for California Cultural and Social Issues, debuts artist, curator and writer Clayton Campbell's newest work, *After Abu Ghraib*. Best experienced through an aesthetic prism as well as a socially engaged stance, Campbell's work tackles a broad range of socio-political issues.

Not content to let sleeping dogs lie, the *After Abu Ghraib* project stimulates a conversation about human rights violations and the widespread use of torture. Campbell transforms the original Abu Ghraib snap shots into large-scale painterly images where bands of translucent reds, blues and purples migrate across the surface shredding and obscuring the original referent as they go. The resulting geometric abstractions are as formally seductive as an Ellsworth Kelly and as disconcerting as Leon Golub's *Interrogation* paintings. Picking at the scab of complacency in the post 9-11 era, this conscientious provocateur puts art to work—striving to raise awareness and questioning the status quo. According to Campbell, "Social commentary in the arts can be much more subtle and multi-leveled than 'in your face,' hectoring diatribes to push a point of view."

Don't miss this opportunity to see the debut of *After Abu Ghraib* before it travels to the Maison Europeenne de la Photographie in Paris. Join us also for the artist walkthrough, a panel discussion and a film screening.

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 22, 2009, 6-8 p.m.

Artist Walkthrough: Join Clayton Campbell for a discussion of his work on *After Abu Ghraib*.
Thursday, January 22, 2009, 6 p.m.
Nichols Gallery, Pitzer College

Panel Discussion: Wednesday, February 18, 2009, 6 p.m.
Nichols Gallery, Pitzer College

Moderator: Ciara Ennis, Director/Curator, Pitzer Art Galleries
Panelists: Dan Segal, Jean M. Pitzer Professor of Anthropology and Historical Studies;
Director, The Center for Social Inquiry
Sheila Pinkel, Acting Chair of Studio Art; Professor, Art and Art History
Departments, Pomona College

Film Screening: *Silhouette City*

Wednesday, March 11, 2009, Noon-1:30 p.m.

Broad Performing Space, Pitzer College

Silhouette City, directed by Michael Wilson & produced by Natalie Zimmerman, presents the history of far-right Christian survivalist groups that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s and traces their influence on America's post-9/11 era of intolerance and fear.

Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Friday, noon-5 p.m. and by appointment

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For more information please contact Anna Mendoza, Curatorial/PR Assistant, Pitzer Art Galleries, Pitzer College at (909) 607-8797, Fax: (909) 607-7880 or e-mail: anna_mendoza@pitzer.edu.

About Pitzer College

Pitzer College is a nationally top ranked undergraduate college of the liberal arts and sciences. A member of The Claremont Colleges, Pitzer offers a distinctive approach to a liberal education by linking intellectual inquiry with interdisciplinary studies, cultural immersion, social responsibility and community involvement.

About Pitzer Art Galleries

Pitzer Art Galleries exists to provide visually arresting and memorable exhibitions that promote the value and understanding of contemporary art within a local, national and international context. The Galleries are comprised of two sites, the Nichols Gallery—committed to solo and group exhibitions by national and international artists both emerging and established—and the Lenzner Family Art Gallery—a space for risk and experimentation dedicated to emerging artists working in all media. Through curatorial creativity and visionary programming Pitzer Art Galleries seeks to provide context, support and a critical framework for artists and curators working today and by doing so inspire meaningful dialogue that fascinates, inspires and invigorates.