

Mark Moore Gallery
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Tues – Sat, 11a – 6p

Jeremy Fish Kenichi Yokono

Rise of the Underground

Opening Reception: October 29, 6-8pm
On View October 29 – December 17, 2011



Mark Moore Gallery presents *Rise of the Underground*, a two-person exhibition featuring new works by Jeremy Fish (CA) and Kenichi Yokono (Japan). Each adopting the age-old craft of woodcutting through a distinctive contemporary technique, Fish and Yokono employ bold and enchanting cartoon-like narratives to illustrate quotidian and pop cultural excerpts. Unmistakably handmade and remarkably intriguing, Yokono's woodblocks explore the "horrors of everyday life," while Fish's paintings and cut-outs reveal untapped histories often swept under the rug. Seemingly innocuous at first observation, each work is intricately laced with undercurrents of the sinister and the foreboding, saturated with cultural reflection, psychoanalysis, and social commentary in a fusion of high and low aesthetics.

Drawing from a background of graphic design, screen-printing, and skateboard culture, San Francisco-based Jeremy Fish celebrates and revives the ancient tradition of storytelling. Enlisting his whimsical band of stylized - yet sentimental - creatures to transmit his anecdotes, Fish embodies the "New Folk" methodology born of the Bay area's "Mission School" artists, such as Barry McGee, Margaret Kilgallen, and Damon Soule. He astutely communicates Orwellian-influenced tales of lore, and grapples with complex human relationships to industry and labor. Somewhat biographical in origin, Fish's storylines simultaneously rekindle folklorist oral tradition and respond to mass culture in a nostalgic visual language, enveloping viewers in its fantastical, mythical environment.

Sourcing prevalent facets of modern Japanese culture like anime, Manga, and yokai horror films, Kenichi Yokono's meticulous carvings contrast rampant notions of globalization and consumerism with the overwhelming "cuteness" (or *kawaii*) found in his country's commercial vernacular. Phantasmagorical and raw in nature, Yokono's work is rife with disturbingly ominous overtones and explicit imagery, steeped in both *ukiyo-e* painting traditions - à la Hokusai - and enticing American skate culture. Referencing possibilities of sex, death, and the paranormal, his practice confronts the complex relationship between token and progressive Japanese culture through a similarly dualized color palette.

A graduate of the San Francisco Art Institute, Jeremy Fish (born 1974, Albany, NY) received his BFA in 1998, and has had solo exhibitions in Mexico City, San Francisco, New York, Laguna Beach and Los Angeles. He has shown in collectives and group shows throughout the world, including Switzerland, Japan, Germany and most recently, Brazil, and has developed a number of international "Mobile Art Tours." His work is featured in the permanent collection of the Laguna Art Museum (CA), as well as numerous private collections of note.

Born in 1972 (Kanazawa, Japan), Yokono was trained at the Kanazawa College of Art (Japan). He has had solo exhibitions in Tokyo, Los Angeles, Vienna and Amsterdam, among numerous international group shows, and has been offered residencies at the McColl Center for Visual Art (NC) and the International Studio and Curatorial Program (NY). He was the recipient of the 2005 Asian Cultural Council Fellowship award, and the Tom Eccles Prize (NY), and was included in the 2011 VOCA Show (Tokyo). The artist lives and works in Tokyo, Japan.