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GREG SMITH

30 April – 5 June 2010

Susan Inglett is pleased to present "Bearded", new work from GREG SMITH in his third solo exhibition with the gallery from 30 April to 5 June 2010. A reception for the artist will be held Friday evening 30 April from 6 to 8 PM.

The Universe is built from a simple form. That form is commonly understood to be an atom and the shape of that form is commonly understood to be a sphere. For my purposes, I would prefer to see that shape as a beard, or at least a caricature of a beard. For better or worse, there are associations that go along with the beard: disguise, masculinity, Santa Claus, homosexuality, survivalism, fundamentalism, and wisdom, for example. My beard shape is used to build objects, mechanical devices, and a set; these in turn are used to construct a range of scenarios, including those that are well outside (and perhaps even antagonistic toward) these familiar associations and stereotypes.

While you may question my efforts to create a world from such a limited building block, I would ask you to reconsider. The beard actually has a lot going for it. Its nearly symmetrical shape is useful in a range of geometric forms and mechanisms. It's amenable to a wide range of materials, from the soft to the structural to the edible. Many of our preconceptions can actually be quite useful, providing shortcuts or paths to meaning.

Unfortunately, however broad the beard's associations, there are many objects and events which the beard does not touch upon. What could constructs of beards possibly have to say about topics as disparate as Jonestown, anxiety, shoes, or press conferences? Even the most expert handling of beards is often not enough. Resourcefulness will only get you so far; also required is sleight-of-hand and a fair bit of loose approximation. The result is all bright lights, crafty maneuvers, earnest construction, and a wisp of smoke and mirrors. A few clever evasions go a long way toward dissolving the beard's limitations. The project is, in the end, a colorful, festive celebration of tenuous reasoning just as dodgy and disarming as a Manhattan Project with a hairy core.

The exhibition will be on view at Susan Inglett Gallery, located at 522 West 24th Street Tuesday to Saturday 10 AM to 6 PM. For additional information, please contact Susan Inglett Gallery at 212.647.9111, fax 212.647.9333 or info@inglettgallery.com.

Artist's materials supplied by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Manhattan Community Arts Fund Grant, made possible by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.