

PRESS RELEASE

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Exhibition: October 12 – December 31, 2009
Artist reception: Friday, December 4, 2009, 5–7 p.m.

FRANK D. COLE: *TALKING PICTURES*, WORKS FROM 1995–2009

SAN JOSE, CA – On October 12, Orchard Commercial North First ARTSpace will present *Talking Pictures*, a comprehensive solo exhibition featuring work by midcareer artist Frank D. Cole. A selection of work completed from 1995 to 2009—including paintings and mixed-media installations that represent Cole's ongoing exploration in storytelling and the interaction between visual images and language—will be on view through December 31, with a reception for the artist held on Friday, December 4, from 5 to 7 p.m. Visiting hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For over 30 years, Cole has followed a narrative impulse, working at the edge of disciplines. Born and raised in Mississippi, he was influenced by southern literary and oral storytelling traditions. As an avid moviegoer, he absorbed images of contemporary culture on large-scale motion picture screens. He was also fascinated with the billboards, movie posters, and hand-painted signs that dot the American landscape. It has been the interaction between visual images and language to create meaning that has inspired Cole's work year after year.

Cole's most recent landscape paintings reveal his exploration of personal narratives. In *Tree of Knowledge*, his private thoughts and personal conversations with himself flow freely onto the brightly painted canvas surface. "*I went to the animal fair—the birds and the bees were there—a big baboon by the light of the moon was combing his auburn hair . . . It is just as silly looking in the shadows . . . For the truth.*" His hand-painted words, which are edited directly on the canvas, seem to take an ordered place in his painting. They appear as textured backgrounds floating in the distance behind golden hills, or they move forward, taking center stage. Fragmented sentences and phrases bring a unique organizational structure and rhythm to Cole's landscape paintings, while they call attention to the continuous strings of words and sounds that permeate the stillness.

Frank D. Cole completed his MFA at the University of California, San Diego, in 1984. He lives and works in Oakland, California, and is an art professor at the University of San Francisco.

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