

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXHIBITION: Jen DeNike: Thirteen

RECEPTION: Saturday, February 9th, 7-9PM

ON VIEW: Saturday, February 9-March 16, 2008

HOURS: Wed. - Sun. 12 PM - 6 PM

Smith-Stewart is pleased to present **THIRTEEN**, a solo exhibition of two new single channel video projections and one new photographic installation by New York-based artist Jen DeNike.

This exhibition marks the debut of a selection of new videos and photographs from a larger, evolving body of work, which uses imagery associated with found vernacular objects in unexpected or even mysterious ways to disrupt latent symbolic or even mystical implications.

On view, is "Flag Girls", 2007, a single channel video projection, whose content originates from a found 1918 postcard, depicting six young women wrapped in the American colonial flag. In the video, DeNike recreates the period scene, but in her version, the girls, while humming the national anthem, free themselves from the flag's oppressive hold and exit off-stage nude.

In another single channel video projection, "Gold Stars", 2008, DeNike appropriates an ancient Scandinavian pagan ritual still celebrated today. In the early weeks of December, young Scandinavian males travel door-to-door wearing white robes and tall, white pointed hats adorned with three gold stars, singing an age-old song that is said to bring light into the seemingly interminable dark winter. The video begins with a close-up view of a pile of robes and pointed hats. Five young men enter a lowly lit stage in the nude. The boys slowly dress while announcing the sound of "AHHHHHH", a familiar meditation technique.

DeNike also debuts a set of eighteen 8" x 10" contact prints made with a large format view camera and then combined with found collaged elements of deep outer space captured by NASA's Hubbel Space Telescope. The eighteen black and white photographs together form a circle that spells out "What Do You Believe In" using the codes of semaphore flag language—a visual mode of Naval communication.

Jen DeNike was born in Norwalk, Connecticut in 1971 and presently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She received her MFA from Bard College in 2002. DeNike's work has recently been the subject of solo exhibitions at SITE Gallery, Sheffield, Tensta Konsthall, Stockholm, and Kunst-Werke, Berlin. Her work was included in the renowned "Greater New York 2005" exhibition at the P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center in New York. Presently, a recent video work can be seen at the Museum of Modern Art, New York as part of the rotating permanent collection.

SMITH-STEWART is located on 53 Stanton Street, between Forsyth and Eldridge Streets. Gallery Hours are Wednesday through Sunday from noon to six. The nearest subway stops are 2nd Avenue/Houston Street on the F and V lines, Grand Street on the B and D lines and Bleecker Street on the 6 line. For more information, please contact the gallery at amy@smith-stewart.com, 212.477.2821. Or visit the website: www.smith-stewart.com.