

MEDIA RELEASE

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Paul Labadie
Herr Steijl

February 28th through April 18th, 2015

Opening Reception: Saturday, February 28th, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm

Deborah Colton Gallery is pleased to present *Herr Steijl*, a solo-exhibition of drawings by Dallas artist, Paul Labadie. The exhibition opens Saturday, February 28th, with a reception for the artist from 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm.

In this current series of graphite drawings Labadie pursues several personal and artistic whims. One of these demonstrates an approach to work carefully and methodically toward a highly polished tonal monochrome rendering. Although the drawing has traditionally been considered as only a 'preliminary' to the more important practice of painting, Labadie defends drawings as valid final works. For him, there is no other media that so seamlessly translates as a direct extension of the mind's eye than the humble pencil and paper. Another whim he followed in this series is what he terms 'fictionalization'. Labadie uses the decorative and personal expression of women's hairstyles as a field for invention and caprice. He endeavors to make 'straight' representational life drawings more playful and ultimately lets the hairstyles themselves become the real subjects of the works. With an interest in the atmosphere of old portrait photography, where the subject, in a neutral or formal setting, has an intense presence as an individual, Labadie seeks to capture both nostalgia and modern humor. Working with live models, his drawings are ultimately collaborations whose liveliness and essence would be impossible without the contribution of the living subject's presence.

After living in Michigan, Minnesota and California, Paul Labadie settled in Dallas, Texas in 1989. During his youth he worked as a carpenter in high-end residential construction. For the last twenty years he has focused on fine architectural woodwork and specialty woodcarving and has worked as a visual artist for the entirety of his life. His vocation and avocation ran as parallel but separate roads through the first several decades of life and began to converge over the last ten years, allowing him to complete more 'artistic' specialty projects as a professional woodworker, shifting from carpenter-cabinetmaker to artisan in wood. His lifelong study of art history and architecture has ultimately influenced both his woodworking and his art making. Paul Labadie's thoughtfulness, creativity and attention to detail has contributed to his receiving the prestigious Texas Chapter of ICAA (Institute of Classical Architecture and Art) 2012 John Staub Award for Craftsmanship. In his drawings also, one can see this exemplified.

Deborah Colton Gallery is founded on being an innovative showcase for ongoing presentation and promotion of strong historical and visionary contemporary artists world-wide, whose diverse practices include painting, works on paper, sculpture, video, photography, performance, conceptual future media and public space installations. The Gallery aspires to provide a forum through connecting Texas, national and international artists to make positive change.