

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**Nathaniel Donnett**

*Black Plastic and tha Paper Bag Kids in tha Soulecistic Playground*

May 8th, 2010 to June 26th, 2010  
Opening Reception: Saturday, May 8th 6 – 8p.m.

Deborah Colton Gallery pleased to announce an exhibition of new mixed media drawings, sculptures and installations by Nathaniel Donnett.

*Black Plastic and tha Paper Bag Kids in tha Soulecistic Playground* by Nathaniel Donnett explores the psychology of social interaction and the development of social patterns from early life to the present. Donnett follows patterns in seemingly innocent places like childhood playgrounds, depicting the influence on an individual, specifically those in African American communities, and how that influence impacts the evolution of society as a whole.

Influential to the pieces created for this exhibition is Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids show - a cartoon that aired in the seventies. In creating the series, Bill Cosby sought the advice of several psychiatrists to assure that there were no negative stereotypes that could result from children watching the program. The children in the show came from a working class neighborhood where they faced everyday challenges and societal issues such as honesty, identity, education, and being different. The children utilized their imagination creating functional objects from discarded materials or "junk". They created their own world from the materials available to them.

As African Americans attempt to articulate their unique situation, they developed a coded language for their survival - ebonics, slang, and signifyin'. Nathaniel incorporates this method of articulation in titling his pieces by combining words that reflect the spirit of the piece with a "shout out" to particular artists.

Talking about his work Nathaniel Donnett says: "I use the playground, The Fat Albert show, along with music, memories, reclaimed materials and objects, traditional art materials, and traditions both African and African American. Language also helps me investigate the definitions and psychology of blackness and color-ism." Nathaniel queries, "As adults, are the roles we play a memory that was formulated from our playground experience? How can being dark or light, being called black or Black, nappy headed or good haired affect a child who becomes an adult? How does one define blackness? How do these things play in other cultures, races, and ethnic groups if at all?" *Black Plastic and tha Paper Bag Kids in tha Soulecistic Playground* by Nathaniel Donnett is a "collage" of all those questions and ideas.

Nathaniel Donnett is a 2010 Artadia Award recipient and was nominated for the Louis Comfort Tiffany Grant in 2009. His works have been shown at the 2010 Armory, Deborah Colton Gallery, Texas Southern University Museum and Lawndale Art Center. He was invited to participate in Project Row Houses.

**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.