

MEDIA RELEASE

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Deborah Colton Gallery Fall 2012 Season Opener

September 8th, 2012 through October 27th, 2012

Opening Reception: Saturday, September 8th, from 6:00 to 9:00 pm Artist Talk: Sunday, September 9th from 2:00 to 4:00 pm

Deborah Colton Gallery is pleased to present *Plastic Fantastic*, an exhibition inspired by plastic pioneer **Dr. Harry D. Anson**. The exhibition is curated by Dr. Anson's daughter, **Catherine D. Anson**, the visual arts editor for *PaperCity* magazine (Houston + Dallas) and is the second curatorial project that Anson has conceived for Deborah Colton Gallery, the last being *A Time for Change*, which inaugurated the fall 2008 season. *Plastic Fantastic* opens Saturday, September 8, 2012, with a reception for the artists and scientist from 6:00 to 9:00 pm.

Plastic Fantastic headlines five principal artists, alongside a performance by two puppeteers — who have been specially commissioned to devise puppet plays just for this show — as well as featuring a happening organized by one of Texas' most provocative artists, who for the seven-week run of the show will realize "a shopping experience" analogous to one of America's retail giants, in collaboration with nearly two dozen other Texas talents. These artists and their performing and visual arts elements all share one common thread — they are made from, or staged from, one form or another of plastic, one of the defining materials of modern life.

Plastic Fantastic is inspired by Dr. Anson, who is interviewed for this exhibition by his daughter; their conversation and his contributions to the field of post-war plastics research and development are presented in a 10-minute film segment edited and produced by **Shau Lin Hon**. As the short documentary reveals, Dr. Anson, who graduated with his PhD in organic chemistry from the University of Maryland in 1942, spent the remainder of the war years in post-doctoral research. He holds more than 70 U.S. patents in the plastics field, where he produced breakthroughs and conducted research and development on polyethylene, polystyrene, polypropylene and polyurethane, while employed during the booming years following World War II, first at U.S. Rubber, then General Aniline and Film (GAF), followed by Spencer Chemical, Gulf Oil, U. S. Steel (where Anson headed the plastics division from 1968 into the early 1980s); later ensued a career, still ongoing, as a patent agent and independent consultant in the chemical field, with a plastics specialty.

As *Plastic Fantastic* underscores, all the "poly" components Anson worked on are used by contemporary artists today towards a myriad of purposes and practices. These range from urethane resin in the case of Connecticut-based **Andrea Morganstern** —who makes her Texas debut here with resin-formed sculptures which in turn are then photographed in nature — to the well-stocked polystyrene consumer pleasures of *Paul-Mart*, which proclaims "Stackin' Em High, Sellin' 'Em Cheap" about the wares curated by **Paul Horn**, assisted in his commercial endeavor by **Solomon Kane**, who collaborated with Horn on the packaging, store displays and end-caps. (Note, paralleling the Wal-Mart concept, *Paul-Mart* is totally about democratic retailing and discount volumes; all art offerings are priced at \$99.99 or less.)

Joining the ode and exploration of plastic are **Selven O'Keef Jarmon**, represented by his intensively laborious button text pieces formed from mass-produced plastic buttons, which are then painstakingly hand sewn; and again **Paul Horn** this time working solo, presenting his signature Cornell-ian pop-up boxes bearing plastic lenticular windows through which the viewer glimpses alternately disquieting or endearing, but always prescient, moments of American culture.

Deborah Colton Gallery's *Plastic Fantastic* also marks the Houston debut of two North Texas artists: **Billy Zinser** of Dallas, and **Karen Arzamendi** of Denton. The former is known for his *Macrodon* series, droll molded plastic toys that exist at the intersection of childhood and contemporary art, critiquing current collecting practices; Zinser's multiples will be stocked at *Paul-Mart* while his large-scale biomorphic sculptures, and their accompanying paintings will also be highlighted in another gallery room. Additionally, watch for Zinser's gargantuan building-sized, forced-air *Macrodon* inflatable to make an appearance. In contrast, Arzamendi's practice is not rooted in fantasy, but in the concept of domesticity and the home. For this exhibit, the artist, whose background encompasses fiber arts and a fascination with quilt-making, will reprise her University of North Texas thesis show with a translucent house formed from quilted plastic zipper bags containing discarded or salvaged moments from everyday life, mostly featuring a plethora of plastic belongings. In dialogue with the cottage-sized house (with a door for the viewer to enter), this sculptor will create a site-specific timeline on the surrounding walls of the main gallery, documenting via found and treasured plastic objects, a modern book of hours referencing the moments of the day, and the cycle of months and years.

Adding a soupcon of performance energy, **Justin Dunford** and **Camella Clements** — who have both performed with Bobbindoctrin Puppet Theatre — each debut a new piece for *Plastic Fantastic*, employing out-sized plastic puppets concocted from neoprene. The opening night puppet performance is set for Saturday, September 8, 2012 at 8:00 pm.

Rounding out the exhibition, former model and now proprietor of the just launched Laboratoria: The Chemistry of Style, **Tatiana Massey** will collaborate with window designer **Balushka** on creating a Blossom Room busting with giant plastic flowers, which sprout eyewear by New Zealand designer **Karen Walker**, French master **Thierry Lasry** (whose shades are favored by Lady Gaga) and British talent **Holly Fulton** whose latest plastic-and-rhinestone necklaces dazzle with their nod to both the Deco period and the future.

NOTE: A Complete Artist Roster for *Plastic Fantastic* and the *Paul-Mart* Store follows. For additional details, including artists' bios and statements, and high-resolution press images, please

contact Deborah Colton Gallery, 713-869-5151; info@deborahcoltongallery.com. *Plastic Fantastic* Artist Lineup

Headlining Artists:

Karen Arzamendi

Paul Horn

Selven O'Keef Jarmon

Andrea Morganstern

Billy Zinser

Shau Lin Hon, *Filmmaker*

Justin Dunford and Philip Hays, *Puppeteers*

Camella Clements, *Puppeter*

***Paul-Mart* Participants:**

Amerimou\$
Scott Burns
Alejandro Castro
Brent Bruni Comiskey
Bill Davenport
Kelley Devine
G.P .S.
Nathan Green
John Paul Hartman
Paul Horn
Daniel Johnston
Marjorie Johnston
Solomon Kane
Felipe Lopez
Michael Macedo Mezell
Jonathan Rosenstein
Alfredo Scaroina
Gian Palacios-Swiatkowski
Dandee Warhol
David Wilhelm

Fashion Installation:

Produced by **Tatiana Massey's** Laboratoria: The Chemistry of Style

Blossom Room crafted by **Balushka**

Collections highlighted by **Karen Walker, Thierry Lasry, Holly Fulton** and more!

Other *Plastic Fantastic* Happenings:

Shop *Paul-Mart*, a retail extravaganza shopping party and performance by **Paul Horn**, with puppet shows by **Justin Dunford** and **Camella Clements** on

Thursday, September 27th, 6:30 to 8:30 pm

Closing Blow Out and Artists Toast on Wednesday, October 31st, 6:00 to 9:00 pm

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 and conceptual future media installations. The gallery aspires to provide a forum through connecting Texas, national and international artists to make positive change.