For Immediate Release

Delta Center for the Arts
LH Horton Jr Gallery presents

Expressions In Paint

Steven Labadessa
– bite –

Brandon C. Smith
Pulling Cows * Residual

October 2 – 30, 2008
Reception: October 2nd, 5 – 7p.m.

–Stockton, CA– The LH Horton Jr Gallery is pleased to present the paintings of Steven Labadessa and Brandon C. Smith, in an exhibition that explores the emotional depth of expressionistic painting. The artists’ work elicit an array of emotions through the use of symbolic and exaggerated line, color and form. Two artists, two themes, two different styles, one commonality—expressing the human condition through their art.

Labadessa’s exquisite drawing departs from realism in its heightened, exaggerated figures, often accompanied by symbolic coloring and imagery. A squirrel in a naked woman’s lap, or a blue, war-paint-like streak across a woman’s cheek, are images removed from what we think of as reality. They are figures of “severe beauty,” as Labadessa describes them.

“Painting, drawing and printmaking serve for me as physically enacted rituals of praise and contemplation,” Labadessa states. “It is a process that allows me to view my attachments (memories, feelings, thoughts) with detachment by rendering an allusion to my private reality. Through the act, the invisible is made visible, suspended in the timelessness of paint — still, but never silent.”

Steven Labadessa completed a Master of Fine Arts in painting from the University of Pennsylvania. He is currently Assistant Professor in Drawing & Painting (Tenure Track) at Missouri Southern State University.
The paintings of Brandon C. Smith’s work is impasto in application, and reminiscent of William Turner’s late period painting style. While some imagery is recognizable as a cow, a bird or a human figure, it is not meant to be a literal representation.

“From the beginning,” Smith reflects, “the dominant idea for my paintings has been a representation not as the world is, but instead as I remember or perceive it to be. The rural landscapes, people, and events that I depict come from a version of my experience. I am not interested in the accurate depiction of these things, for that has never had meaning for me. The landscape has a presence, a mixture of depression, anxiety and loss as well as health and fortitude. Two or five cows grazing in a green field can be majestic and beautiful or pitiful and lonely. Subjects often become metaphors for other things; cows for people, people for dramatic event, or landscape for livelihood.”

Brandon C. Smith completed a Master of Fine Arts Degree from the University of Cincinnati. He is currently an Adjunct Faculty member of the Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, where he teaches painting and drawing.

—Digital Images Available Upon Request

The LH Horton Jr Gallery is a non-profit organization and a premier exhibition space in the city of Stockton. The primary mission of the Gallery is to promote quality and culturally diverse artwork in support of our students’ education and the community at large.

The Gallery offers excellent exhibition opportunities to local, regional, and national artists, lenders and guest curators. The Gallery presents artists’ work in all media, with no thematic or geographic restrictions. Student Exhibitions are held at the end of Spring Semester. Artists’ work is selected through submission of exhibition proposals, juried by the Gallery Committee. Located in the Central Valley near Sacramento and San Francisco, the Gallery features over 2000 square feet of exhibition space, and a 21-foot extended ceiling with hanging mounts and professional lighting.

The Gallery is located on the ground floor of Shima Center, and is wheelchair accessible. Admission is free and open to the public. Recommended parking is available in the Shima lot for a nominal fee. Tours are welcome, and Gallery Talks and special needs may be addressed by contacting the Gallery.