

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Swarm Gallery is pleased to present the exhibition

**DISTANT COUSINS** | John Casey  
Project Space | **NATURE BOY** | Don Porcella

April 3 – May 10, 2009  
Exhibition opening Friday, April 3, 6-9PM – Live jazz by Host Family

**OAKLAND, Calif.** – 15 February 2009 – We are proud to present *Distant Cousins*, John Casey's first solo exhibition at Swarm Gallery. For his show, Casey features a new body of work – ink drawings on paper and sculpture-based installation.

**John Casey** is obsessed with fictitious human morphology. At first glance, his works seem to portray a menagerie of deformed creatures. A collective analysis reveals this array of oddball creations to be a series of psychological studies – self-portraits of the artist's inner psyche in all of its multifaceted incarnations. Some sad, some horrific, and some whimsical, these characters evoke responses from laughter and sympathy to disgust and discomfort. While one might call Casey's work the exorcising of inner demons, his creations inspire more empathy than they do loathing. By depicting the grotesque as pitiable, John Casey illuminates the darkest corners of the mind, seeking redemption for all of us.

"My creatures are called monsters by some, but I often feel that the connotations associated with 'monster' don't always apply to these little guys unless one can add descriptors like 'vulnerable' and 'fragile' to the definition of monster. Maybe I have issue with the monster moniker because I see my critters as self-portraits. Nick Capasso, director of the DeCordova Museum, once referred to my work as 'little exorcisms' and I like that description. The idea that I expel my inner demons in the form of drawn, painted, or sculpted critters appeals to me."

*John Casey has exhibited in galleries all over the globe, including TAG Art Gallery, Nashville, TN, Black Maria Gallery, Los Angeles, CA, OKOK Gallery, Seattle, WA, and Neurotitan Gallery, Berlin, Germany, among others. He's shown at institutions such as Musée d'Art Contemporain, Bordeaux, France, Palo Alto Arts Center, Palo Alto, CA, and at institutions where his work is a part of the collection, the de Young Museum, SF and di Rosa Preserve, Napa. Originally from Salem, Mass, John currently lives and works in Oakland, California.*

Project Space | **NATURE BOY** | Don Porcella

**Don Porcella** creates whimsical and subversive sculptures from pipe cleaners. This "craft material" is taken to a high art form as the content and structure play with our concept of consumerism, reality and our own weird mortality. Also at play in Porcella's pipe cleaner sculptural installations is a lighthearted frivolity that conceals a deeper environmental and nature loving agenda. This sensibility comes from exploring the Sierra Nevada Mountains every winter and summer as his family hiked, climbed and skied their way through California and Nevada's spectacular mountain wilderness. Now living and working in New York City, Porcella seems to be calling his earlier nature experiences back in some sort of animalistic call to the wild.

*Don Porcella's artwork has been exhibited at other galleries in New York City, Berlin Germany, East Hampton, NY, Paris, France, Portland, Oregon, Washington D.C. and San Francisco, California. Several prominent art collectors have recently purchased Porcella's artwork and he has been featured in publications in the last year from Israel, France and the United States. He was born and raised in the countryside outside of suburban Modesto, California, and currently lives and works in New York City.*

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