

# SHANE CAMPBELL GALLERY

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## Let's Be Frank

Sculptor Jason Meadows evokes Shelley's monster, via the junk pile

By Jessica Baran *Tuesday, May 15 2007*

### Details

#### **Jason Meadows: "Frame Narrative"**

Tonya Bonakdar Gallery  
521 West 21st Street  
Through June 16

"Frame Narrative," a solo show by L.A.-based mixed-media sculptor Jason Meadows, presents a kind of natural-history-museum display of a monstrous batik-loving hunter-gatherer, evidently made extinct by his insatiable bad taste. Frank, the show's main specimen, is a larger-than-life, mop-headed figure frozen midlurch, with raised hand-rake claws and wood-scrap limbs jerry-rigged at the joints by clamps and bolts. A reincarnation of Mary Shelley's monster as an ill-fated victim of our times, he seems to have risen from a trash-heap of big-box-store detritus. An amalgam of swing-set chains, crown-molded columns, fish netting, and garden tools—there was never a fellow more defined, or beset, by what he hoarded.

Meadows's pieces slip cleverly between the abstract and major-brand familiar. Bright splattered-wax paintings; a teak room partition with zig-zag Southwestern flare; a portrait of the classic Frankenstein air-brushed on sliding panes—they could be, respectively, Frank's wall art, den shelving, and medicine cabinet. They also evoke the low-end tradition in high art: the tie-dyed freak-out in Jackson Pollock, the domestic Ikea in Donald Judd.

It's the consistent mark of slowly plotted put-togetherness that sustains this show's air of tragic affection. You sense not only the artist, but Frank himself hoisting four coffins into a towering, free-standing frame anchored in dirt, or thrusting PVC pikes into the "heads" of old-man scare-masks, all the while thinking, "This is a really good idea." You'd be almost inhuman not to identify with this creature, so sincerely taken in by his quixotic creative crusades. *Dead Heads*, a post-sacred-rite bouquet of slain consumer trifles—faux-leather fabric samples, chunks of flame-orange bungee cord, torn strips of camouflage—distills what this show seems to be about: the soft, mutual victimization that occurs in the course of our incurable love for our own ideas—when our flashes of superiority land us with the dubious distinction of having, say, pumpkin-carved a basketball and cast it in bronze.

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