

eric firestone gallery

For Immediate Release

Michael Cajero: *We Need to Dream This All Again*

Eric Firestone Gallery

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Dates: February 7 - March 15, 2008

Artist Reception: Thursday, February 7, 7:00-10:00pm

Eric Firestone Gallery is please to announce the exhibit **Michael Cajero: *We Need to Dream This All Again***. The exhibit will survey the ceramics, drawings and papier-mâché installations by longtime Arizona artist Michael Cajero. Michael Cajero was born in Tucson, Arizona and remains one of Arizona's most unique, prolific and critically acclaimed artists. For the past thirty years Cajero has concentrated on furthering the Arte Povera and Process

Art movements. With unbridled energy he summons his creations to life, directing them to act out universal dramas drawn from current events as well as the Mexican folktales that so impressed him in his youth.



Exotically patterned gift-wrap, brown corrugated cardboard, and shredded computer and document paper culled from waste receptacles are Cajero's primary medium. These cast-off materials, heightened with acrylic paint, become the flesh, hair and clothes that cover skeletons of thick, yet easily bendable aluminum wire. For several years the figures were ablaze in wild color and pattern when a concurrent and ongoing exploration of ceramics made Cajero see that the carbon produced in the raku process could also be manipulated in his papier-mâché pieces. Black produced depth, defined breaks in color and movement, and emphasized mass; it helped create silhouettes and connected to his drawings like never before. Through color and papier-mâché, a time-tested craft borrowed from traditional Mexican folk artists, Cajero is able to imbue his figures with great realism; his sculptures take on individual personas and are empowered by the artist to exhibit a full range of emotions. A sculpture's personality, profession, or social standing is described by its visage, posture and the clothes they are given and how they wear them. Cajero always modeled the everyday person, tapping into the traditions of artists who did the same, Bonnard, Degas and Rodin in particular. Cajero gives a knowing nod to these artists in the way he uses mass, broken color and fragmented pattern to define shapes and set mood, and in how their almost autobiographical work conveys the artists' intimate understanding of the frailty, resilience and strength of their models and subjects. More impressive, perhaps, is how Cajero's sensitivity to his subject unveils his uneasiness concerning the world's current political, economic, religious, and social frictions. Cajero's ragged figures, feral creatures and turbulent installations draw inspiration from ancient history, art history, folklore, literature, music, mythology, poetry and a concern for the human condition. Cajero's works are powerful and magical performative creations, simultaneously baroque and surreal they captivate and puzzle, transporting all who enter his dark sculptural worlds into a profound sense of wonder and hope.

Michael Cajero was born in Tucson, AZ in 1947, he holds a BFA from the University of Arizona and an MFA in Painting, Sculpture and Art History from Kent State University. Cajero has been the recipient of Visual Arts Fellowships from the Tucson Pima Arts Council in 1994 and 2001 and a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in 1993-1994; his papier-mâché works are in the permanent collection of the Tucson Museum of Art and the Phoenix Art Museum.

For complete information as well as images please contact Eric Firestone Gallery in Scottsdale, Arizona via email: david_tooker@ericfirestonegallery.com

Image: **Josephine** papier-mâché 37h x 24w x 43d inches 2007