

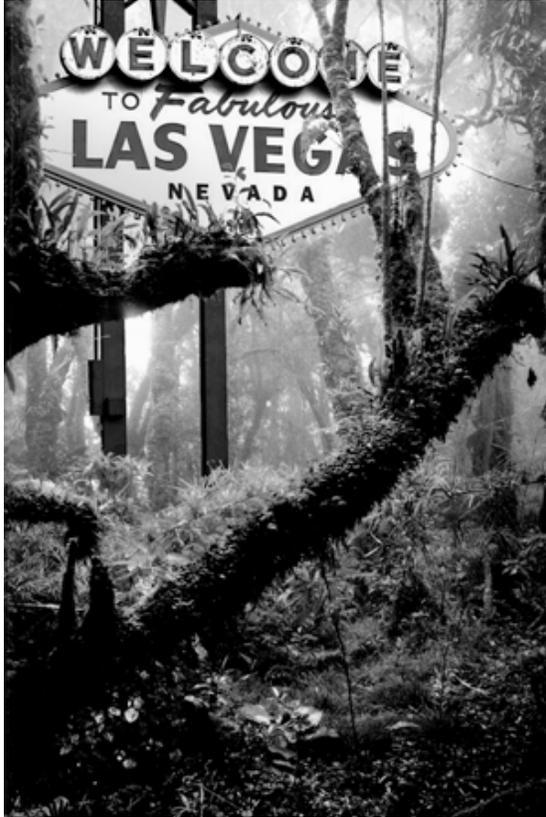
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Frank Chang

Amazon River Transplant

September 13th- October 4th, 2008

Reception: Saturday, September 13th, 7 – 10 PM



Sea and Space Explorations is pleased to announce *Amazon River Transplant*, a solo exhibition of new work by Los Angeles-based artist Frank Chang that satirically proposes to supply Las Vegas with water from the Amazon River. With sculptures, drawings, text, and collage, he invites viewers to closely examine the ecosystems, histories, and ideologies of these sites.

Terrain models represent the Amazon, the Mojave, and a fictitious water route connecting them. As water drains from the Amazon to the Mojave, it will slowly transform arid desert into lush forest. Conceived as both a sculpture and an "information center," the exhibit allows visitors to watch how the proposed transplant alters both environments as they browse material describing these landscapes as sites of profound human intervention. Chang also presents a segment of pipeline constructed from the pages of books that defined the mythology of the American West: Daniel Boone's biography, Paul Bunyan stories, and the writings of Lewis & Clark, Frederick Jackson Turner, and Thomas Jefferson. A series of collages and drawings depict the effect the transplant will have on the local histories by creating an alternate, hybrid reality.

Despite current interest in sustainability, our thinking often remains trapped in an apparent binary between conservation and exploitation. On the one hand is the idea that Nature has a “baseline” state that, barring human intervention, could perpetuate itself indefinitely. On the other, Nature is seen as untapped or inert until civilization has encountered it and made use of its resources. Romantic intellectuals, travelers, and scientists explored these opposed ideas, and Chang’s work examines their ongoing legacy for American identity and politics.

Amazon River Transplant stems from scholarly work that offers an alternative to the conservation-exploitation bind. Recent research shows that perhaps the Amazon is not the pristine wilderness it appears to be: Twelve-thousand years ago, native Amazonians may have begun the largest landscape transformation in history, shaping an ecosystem that thrives because of human intervention, not in spite of it.

Frank Chang received his MFA in Art from the California Institute of the Arts in 2005. His work has been exhibited at Armory Northwest, Los Angeles (2005); Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond (2005); LA Design Center, Los Angeles (2005); and TCB art inc., Melbourne (2006). He is also a co-organizer of Monte Vista, an artist-run space in Highland Park that hosts exhibitions, performances, discussions, and more.

Sea and Space Explorations
4755 York Blvd, LA, CA 90042
<http://www.seaandspace.org>
Gallery is open Saturdays and Sundays 1-5 PM and by appointment
Tel.: 323-445-4015. email: info@seaandspace.org

DIRECTIONS from Los Angeles: From the 5, take the 2 north. Take the Verdugo Road exit. Left onto Eagle Rock Boulevard. Right onto York Boulevard (major cross street is Armadale Boulevard).