

PRESENTS



RANDY WRAY
Chapter and Verse

April 27 – June 2, 2007

OPENING RECEPTION:
Friday, April 27, 6-8pm

Black & White Gallery is pleased to announce a solo show of recent works by Randy Wray at the gallery's Chelsea space from April 27 to June 2.

The sculptures, paintings, and drawings in Randy Wray's exhibition *Chapter and Verse*, take a variety of approaches to the subject of Faith. Diverse styles, materials, and perspectives converge to form a kind of psychic cubism. The resulting manifestations possess a formal intensity that transcends conventional notions of beauty. By skillfully joining ambiguous forms with images of webs, crosses, and the American flag, the artist achieves works rife with symbolic interpretations, often of a Southern Gothic flavor. With titles like *Dark Matter*, *Faith Collider*, *Toward a Unified Theory*, and *Apparition*, Wray evokes the language of both the laboratory and the pulpit drawing comparisons between science and religion. The distinctive works produced by his sophisticated sense of play are themselves affirmations of faith, even as they raise questions about spirituality, patriotism, and belief in things unseen.

In a hanging sculpture entitled *Higgs boson*, Wray gives form to the hypothetical elementary particle predicted to exist by the Standard Model of particle physics. He also references the ritual flower offerings made in sixth century Buddhist temples that later became known as ikebana. Dispensing with the plants, he composes shredded paper, quartz crystals, and electric lights in his offerings and calls them *Ickybana*. In a series of collages entitled *Offal*, Wray collects the debris generated as by-products during his sculpture making and painting practice and recycles it. These compositions of scrap paint and paper are mounted in his own frames fashioned from sticks, papier-mâché, and even small geodes, giving them an almost Victorian appeal. The artist's relatively restrained sculpture *Sanctuary* counterbalances the curvaceous and flamboyant *Preacher's Daughter* suggesting a penchant for the philosophizing of both the Dalai Lama and Dolly Parton.

Wray's conglomerations of seemingly contradictory ideas and impulses appropriately echo the polarities inherent in discussions of faith. While it is interesting to consider the juxtapositions of synthetic and natural materials, or representational imagery and passages of pure material gesture, it is clear that polemic distinctions are beside the point. The energy that pulses throughout the works creates infinite invisible paths of connection while Wray's handiwork provides further evidence that God is in the details.

Randy Wray was born in 1965 in North Carolina and lives in New York. His work has appeared in numerous solo and group exhibitions during the last fifteen years, most recently at Kate MacGarry Gallery, London. In 2002 Wray received a Guggenheim fellowship and in 2003 had his first solo museum show at the Weatherspoon Art Museum.

For more information and to request images, please contact the gallery at info@blackandwhiteartgallery.com

Image: Randy Wray, Apparition, 2005-2006
acrylic, paper, pencil, glitter, oil paint on canvas, 48" x 36"