



# AS IT IS

**AND/OR/NEITHER/NOR**

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**ANDREW OWEN A01**  
**SOLO EXHIBITION**  
**MARION SCOTT GALLERY**  
**MAY 22 - JULY 4, 2010**

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**Marion Scott Gallery: 308 Water Street, Vancouver**  
**Opening Reception: Saturday, May 22, 12:00 - 9:00 PM**  
**Afternoon Entertainment: Alexandra & VYSO Friends - clarinet and flute**  
**Evening Entertainment: Friends With The Help - bustin' rhymes**  
**Canadian Art Gallery Hop Talk: Novelist Timothy Taylor: Sat., May 29, 1:30 PM**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 11, 2010

## **Marion Scott Gallery to Present First Vancouver Exhibition of Work by Canadian Multi-media Artist Andrew Owen (aka A01)**

***From photo-based public art to floral silhouettes, artist's wide-ranging work defies easy categorization***

**Vancouver, BC** — The Marion Scott Gallery is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of new and recent work by Vancouver-based conceptual artist **Andrew Owen**, also known as **A01**. Opening **May 22** and continuing through **July 4**, **AS IT IS: AND/OR/NEITHER/NOR** will feature more than 20 works in a range of media, including paintings, photographic images and works made from found materials. The solo exhibition will be the Montreal-born artist's first in a Vancouver gallery.

"Andrew Owen, or A01 as he is more commonly known, is a Canadian artist with international experience whose work deserves to be seen by as many people as possible," said MSG director Judy Kardosh. "As a prominent member of Vancouver's innovative street art scene, A01 has already had a strong impact on the public consciousness with his photo-based interventions," she said. "But the art that Owen puts on the street is only one aspect of his prolific practice. By encompassing a range of his expression, this exhibition reveals the complexity and unity of his multi-faceted output."

The exhibition will draw from several different yet related series that make up A01's extensive process-based practice. Included are numerous works from his striking **Excavations** series. Owen creates these works using old poster hoardings harvested from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Cutting through their papered surfaces to varying depths, he painstakingly strips away the layers of posters according to a predetermined design. The unique subtractive procedure results in colourful patterned works that preserve the texture and inherent beauty of their original environment.

Also featured are examples from the artist's ongoing series of large- and medium-scale floral paintings, called **Impressions**. In order to create these works, Owen uses real flowers as natural stencils, placing them against large pieces of canvas that he has previously painted a uniform colour. He then sprays additional paint over the flowers before lifting them away from the canvas, leaving behind actual-scale silhouettes (or "impressions") of the plants. Informed in part by his deep study of Chinese ink painting and also recalling his own past as a spray-can artist, these gorgeous works are at once traditional and contemporary, while somehow managing to be neither.

The exhibition also contains several examples of Owen's well-known photo-based art pieces, some of which have been displayed outdoors at various sites in Gastown,

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Vancouver's principal historical district. Included are pieces from the **Re-photo-cubic Portrait Tableaux** series—large arrangements of photographic prints that are shot from a multitude of locations, perspectives and timeframes. Designed as intimate readings of place, these works portray subjects ranging from neighbourhood residents and workers to street punks and local flora.

According to exhibition curator Robert Kardosh, what ties all of Owen's work together is an overriding preoccupation with the role of the artist coupled with a desire to expose and shatter the myth of representational objectivity. "In every case, A01 wants to make the point that representation in art is an illusion and therefore inherently false," Kardosh says. "Owen's cubism-inspired photo-collages, for instance, are primarily concerned with foregrounding their constructed nature in a way that forces viewers to acknowledge the limits of photographic representation."

In addition to using representational art to challenge and deconstruct its own authority, Owen is equally concerned with finding ways to diminish the distortion that arises with any act of artistic interpretation. As an example, Kardosh cites A01's insistence on reproducing his photographs at actual life size, a technique that is designed to avoid any erroneous (and therefore inappropriate) alterations in scale. Owen's floral works are similarly life size, the result, Kardosh observes, "of a process in which the flowers are essentially allowed to produce their own representations of themselves."

**AS IT IS: AND/OR/NEITHER/NOR** showcases the engaging work of an emerging and prolific conceptual artist. From photo-based street art and excavated found art to spray-painted floral works inspired by traditional Chinese ink painting, the work of Andrew Owen transcends categories while maintaining a singular and compelling vision.

Opening reception: Saturday, May 22, 12:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Exhibition talk with novelist **Timothy Taylor**: Saturday, May 29, 1:30 pm

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For more information, please contact Robert Kardosh: 604-685-1934

**Andrew Owen** was born in 1962 in Montreal, Quebec and raised in Toronto, Ontario. A pioneer of Toronto's street art scene in the early 1980s, he had his first solo exhibition at the renowned Isaacs Gallery in 1986. In the 1990s, Owen gave up a successful career as a commercial artist in order to pursue a more creative vision, travelling and living in countries as diverse as Japan, India, Korea, and Taiwan Republic of China. During this time, he studied traditional Chinese ink painting and the teachings of Buddhism. In 2004, Owen (or A01, as he often prefers to be known) returned to Canada, settling in Vancouver, British Columbia. In a recent artist statement, A01 declares that "the moment artwork is predetermined or categorized, an infinity of potentialities collapse and vanish, and it becomes just another leaden material object."

