

M E D I A R E L E A S E



Modular Church, 2007, cedar, Plexiglas, hardware, 2.5 x 3m

Mitch Robertson *567: Economies of Good & Evil*

8 March – 13 April 2008

Opening reception: Friday, 7 March 2008, 8:00 pm

Artist talk: Saturday, 8 March 2008, 2:00 pm

Forces of good and evil confront one another at Saint Mary's University Art Gallery this spring, and a good time is had by all. Toronto artist Mitch Robertson plays with viewers' expectations and breaks up simple moral binaries.

Born in Woodstock, Ontario in 1974, Mitch Robertson grew up in rural Southwestern Ontario and studied at York University. He graduated from the Toronto School of Art in 1997 and lives in Toronto. Over the past decade, he has exhibited across Canada and in Australia, England, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Switzerland and the United States.

To produce the series *666* (2006-07) – in the Evil corner – Robertson located every house in southwestern Ontario whose street address corresponded with “the mark of the beast” and did a charcoal rubbing of its house number. Representing Good is *Pepsijesus* (2003), a set of 24 identical statuettes of Christ sporting the popular soft drink's trademark colours.

Robertson plays on the cinematic signifiers of “white hats” and “black hats” by painting over cowboy hats on antique stereoscope cards – an opposite colour for each side of the image, cancelling each other out when combined in the stereo viewer. In *Winners and Losers* (2005-07), he alternates the colours of the jerseys in old black-and-white photos of tug-of-war teams. Fuzzing the moral and tonal boundaries further, he applies a grey scale, from black to white, to the clothing of generic line-ups of anonymous men, in *From Good to Bad* (2006).

Viewers may have a contemplative moment in a readymade *Modular Church* (2007) that is mobile, collapsible and reminiscent of a Tom Horton's TimBit box. Robertson's *Church Paintings* (2006-07) continue the religious theme, with images based on the covers of parish cookbooks from the 1960s and '70s.

A full-colour, hard-cover catalogue, with an essay by curator Steven Matijcio and an interview of the artist by Robert McKaskell, accompanies the exhibition and is available for purchase.

The exhibition will open with a public reception on Friday evening, 7 March 2008 at 8:00 pm. Mitch Robertson will be present, and will also give a public talk and walk-through of the exhibition on Saturday afternoon, 8 March 2008 at 2:00 pm. All events are free of charge and open to the public, at Saint Mary's University Art Gallery in the Loyola Building, 5865 Gorsebrook Avenue. Refreshments will be served.

Mitch Robertson *567: Economies of Good & Evil* appears at Saint Mary's University Art Gallery from 8 March through 13 April 2008. The exhibition is organised by Plug In ICA, Winnipeg and Oakville Galleries, Oakville, with the financial assistance of the Canada Council for the Arts, the Manitoba Arts Council, the Ontario Arts Council, the Winnipeg Arts Council and the Corporation of the Town of Oakville. All exhibitions and associated programmes at Saint Mary's University Art Gallery receive significant support from the Canada Council for the Arts.

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