

happenings

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Edmier exhibit opens Dec. 5 at Rauschenberg Gallery

Florida SouthWestern State College announces an ambitious new exhibition by New York artist Keith Edmier at the Bob Rauschenberg Gallery (located on FSW's Lee County/Thomas Edison campus).

Opening with a lecture and public reception on Saturday, Dec. 5, Keith Edmier: Edison Impluvium is a site-specific, full-scale sculptural recreation of the historic c.1910 concrete swimming pool (located on the nearby property of the Edison-Ford Winter Estates) and will include the first-ever exhibition in Florida of the late, great inventor Thomas Edison's "full-head" plaster-cast death mask.

A lecture by the artist will be held at 6 p.m. Dec. 5. The opening reception will follow from 7 to 9 p.m. The exhibit will run through Feb. 6.

Immersing visitors in a haunting (even tomb-like) hall of monochrome faces, the cementitious interior walls of the "swimming pool" sculpture (sans water) are adorned with fifty original plaster life masks. Many created by Edmier personal-

ly – making molds directly from the faces and bodies of his subjects, these "casts" are a physical record of time and include "self-portraits" of the artist as a teenager; in his 20's and most recently as a middle-aged man in his late '40s. Keith Edmier's parents (Tom and Beverly) are memorialized alongside a chronological "who's who" of the artist's friends, actors, comedians, musicians and various subjects from his personal life and work history (including "life masks" of Farrah Fawcett, Michael J. Fox, Charlie Sheen, David Bowie, former studio-mate Matthew Barney and numerous others). According to the artist, "Edison's Fort Myers pool is reimagined as an ancient ruin and references both the Roman Republic-era idea of life casts as ancestral masks and the water basins (known as impluviums) in the atriums of houses like those found in Pompeii."

Keith Edmier was born in 1967 on Chicago's South Side and grew up in the suburb of Tinley Park. At age 17, Edmier moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career

in the film industry creating special make-up effects. His first job was working for Rick Baker on Michael Jackson's *Caption EO* (which was directed by Francis Ford Coppola). He then worked for Chris Walas on David Cronenberg's remake of *The Fly*, which won an Academy Award for best make-up in 1986. Edmier briefly attended The California Institute of the Arts/CalArts (studying under the influential artist Mike Kelley), then continued to work in the film business throughout the rest of the 1980's, supervising effects for films including *Bride of Re-Animator*, *Barton Fink* for Joel and Ethan Coen, and the television series *Freddy's Nightmares*.

In the beginning of 1991, Edmier moved to New York City to work as a fine artist. He had his first solo show in 1993 at the Friedrich Petzel Gallery. He has exhibited extensively since – including solo exhibitions at the USF Contemporary

Art Museum/Tampa (curated by Bob Rauschenberg Gallery Director Jade Dellinger), the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Andy Warhol Museum, and major mid-career surveys at the CCS Bard Hessel Museum of Art, New York and De Hallen Haarlem/the Frans Hals Museum, the Netherlands. His work is in numerous private and public collections including the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Hessel Museum of Art/CCS-Bard College, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; The Denver Art Museum; The Israel Museum, Tele Viv and The Tate Gallery in London.

Gallery hours are Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Saturday 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Closed Sundays and Holidays (including FSW's winter break from Dec. 20 - Jan. 3)

For more info, call (239)-89-9313 or visit www.RauschenbergGallery.com