

LAMONTAGNE GALLERY

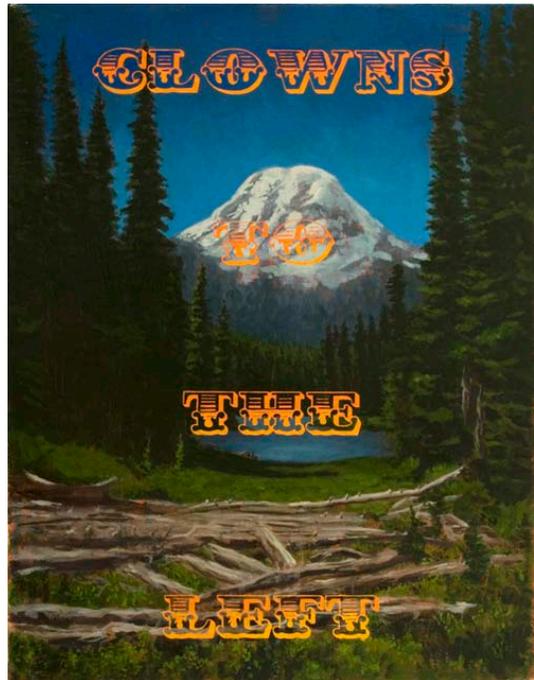
555 East Second St. | South Boston, MA 02127

Joe Wardwell

Die Young

September 10th - October 10th, 2009

Reception: September 10th, 2009, 6 PM to 8PM



LaMontagne Gallery is proud to present **Joe Wardwell's** "Die Young," whose title is taken from Neil Young's "Hey Hey My My (Into the Black)": a song about Rock and Roll heroes dying young, and the desire to get out while you're ahead. The Rock Star mantra serves as an overarching theme to the show, as well as an appropriate reflection of the times. Joe Wardwell's paintings mark the changes currently developing in American society and its natural environment, while evoking nostalgia for the mythologies and dreams our nation was built upon. Wardwell paints collaged images, constructed visions of unfettered American wilderness: symbols of Manifest Destiny and American exceptionalism. By combining sources from 19th century Hudson River School painters, as well as his own photographs taken from his home state of Washington, he manufactures these idealized landscapes. The images are adorned with text scrolling across the landscapes, derived from rock music lyrics and heavily stylized silk-screened concert posters. The stark contrast is reminiscent of postcards, billboards, movie titles, or album covers—with the familiar waft of commercialism. Instead of the la-dee-da-dee Wish you were here postcard phrase, the slightly oblique rock lyric is emblazoned in its place. The romanticized yearning for freedom, utopia and fantasy of rock music echoes across the ideal sublime landscape, eerily devoid of human presence. The words of Neil Young, the Flaming Lips and Def Leppard, paired with idyllic Albert Bierstadt-esque landscapes, is a nostalgic postcard from the future. Here is the American Dream—what it was, what it is, what it will be.

Gallery Hours: Wednesday - Saturday, 11 - 6 PM | (617) 482 - 8400
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