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COKE WISDOM O'NEAL *The Box (Texas)*

APRIL 23 – MAY 23, 2009

OPENING: THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 6–8PM

Mixed Greens is thrilled to announce *The Box (Texas)*, Coke Wisdom O'Neal's fourth solo exhibition with the gallery. In a continuation of his *Box Series*, begun in New York City in 2005, O'Neal and his turn-of-the-century camera traveled to the rural border town of San Isidro, Texas, to document its denizens inside a colossal 22-foot-tall sculpture. The result is a photographic study in identity and identification.

In the isolation of South Texas, O'Neal collaborated with the San Isidro community to build and activate his large-scale specimen box. They constructed the sculpture on a ranch and then moved it to the local school grounds, where O'Neal fostered an immersive and interactive art experience. O'Neal taught photography to students and invited local residents to be photographed. Later, the Box returned to the ranch, where workers and livestock were invited in.

Ultimately, O'Neal's Box exists as a sculpture (combining Claes Oldenburg's scale and Donald Judd's form to absurd effect), a performance, and a series of photographs. O'Neal uses the Box as a framing device — a blank canvas that obliterates geographic location, leaving the viewer to carefully

observe light, pose, expression, and attire to envision a narrative. Together, the subjects' vignettes uniquely represent their community, without direction or digital manipulation by the artist. O'Neal has set the stage and invited San Isidro to join him.

O'Neal plans to continue his *Box Series* nationally and internationally.

Coke Wisdom O'Neal is a New York City based artist whose work has been exhibited in numerous venues throughout the country including Cuchifritos, New York City (2008), Northern Illinois University Art Museum, DeKalb, IL (2007), Socrates Sculpture Park, Queens, NY (2006), The Arizona Museum of Fine Arts (2003), The Furman Gallery at Lincoln Center, New York City (2002), and White Columns, New York City (2001). His solo exhibitions include Mixed Greens, New York City (2003, 2005, 2007), Finesilver Gallery, Houston, TX (2006), Evo Gallery, Santa Fe, NM (2005), and Aaron Packer Gallery, Chicago, IL (2004).