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LEE STOETZEL *Big Fall*

APRIL 23–MAY 23, 2009

OPENING: THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 6–8PM

Mixed Greens is thrilled to announce *Big Fall*, Lee Stoetzel's fourth solo show with the gallery. All of the sculptural works are instantly recognizable icons rendered in wood.

For nearly a decade, Stoetzel has reworked memorable icons—like the VW bus and the “Captain America” chopper from *Easy Rider*—out of Pecky cypress, a naturally degraded wood from his home state of Florida. Each piece was created at a scale of 1:1. As the viewer investigated the craftsmanship, the familiar object was transformed and rediscovered.

In this show, Stoetzel increases his range of materials to include fractured mesquite, veneer, and spalted maple (where the naturally occurring lines in the wood appear to be graphite drawings). He broadens his range of subjects to include McDonald's food, a Chuck Close catalog, a single-speed bicycle, and a system of gutters and leaves. The scale of each piece is warped often to ‘Oldenburgian’ proportions. For example, Stoetzel's forty-eight-inch French fry sculpture, *Hard Fries*, becomes a conceptually fitting counterpart to Oldenburg's *Soft Hamburger* from 1962.

Big Fall derives its title from Stoetzel's largest installation to date—a winding lattice of oversized veneer gutters wrapping around the gallery, spilling oversized leaves onto the floor.

Big Fall also refers to the failure and re-imagining of cultural emblems. Each of Stoetzel's iconic subjects is purposefully built with harshly formed, degraded wood so that the pieces look fossil-like and frozen in time—tired and nostalgic, yet instantly

recognizable. The power of the natural materials calls attention to the temporary predicament of the manmade, while the iconic nature of each piece fights to remain vital.

Lee Stoetzel lives and works in Chester Springs, PA. His solo exhibitions include Mixed Greens (2004, 2005, 2007), the Philadelphia International Airport (2008), and Tricia Collins Contemporary Art, New York City (1996-1999). His work is currently traveling in “Worlds Away: New Suburban Landscapes” which originated at the Walker Arts Center and then traveled to the Carnegie Museum and the Yale School of Architecture. He was an integral part the Katonah Museum show “I Love The ‘Burbs” (2006) and the Islip Museum’s “Design for Living” (2005). Other group exhibition venues include the Abington Art Center, Jenkintown, PA (2007, 2008, 2009); Jessica Murray Projects, Brooklyn (2002); Meadows Museum, Dallas, TX (2000); Michigan Contemporary Art Center (2000); and Stalke Galleri, Copenhagen, Denmark (1999).