

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Sago Incident: Curt LeMieux, A Solo Show

November 29th- December 7th, 2008

Reception: Saturday, November 29th, 8 – 11 PM

On January 2, 2006, an explosion occurred in the Sago Mine in Sago, West Virginia trapping 13 workers underground with dangerous levels of carbon monoxide and methane gas that prevented adequate rescue attempts. 12 of the 13 miners were found dead nearly two full days after the explosion took place. A company CEO stated that the carbon monoxide levels taken near the bodies at the time of discovery indicated that the miners were poisoned to death within fifteen minutes. Randal McCloy Jr. survived the blast and wrote a letter addressed to the families of the victims that detailed a prolonged struggle involving futile attempts at escape, eventual acceptance of death, group prayer, silence, and a slow dieing off one by one. The names of the victims are: Thomas "Tom" Paul Anderson, age 39, Alva Martin "Marty" Bennett, age 5, James Arden "Jim" Bennett, age 61, Jerry Lee Groves, age 56, George Junior Hamner, age 54, Terry Michael Helms, age 50, Jesse Logan Jones, age 44, David William Lewis, age 28, Martin Toler Jr. age 51, Fred Gay "Bear" Ware Jr., age 58, Jackie Lynn Weaver, age 51, and Marshall Cade Winans, age 50.

“The Sago Incident” was created in response to Upton Sinclair’s novels The Coal King and Coal Wars. The literature inspired LeMieux to do research on a variety of issues related to mining operations including working conditions and mine disasters. “The Sago Incident” uses an efficiency of materials. Charcoal briquettes are bunched together in groups of approximately twelve and dangle from a single pieces of stressed thread. A row of drinking straws is strung end-to-end atop each cluster creating a light and airy contrast to the physical tension created by the weight of the coal and the fragility of the thread. Viewers may reference the mass production and recreational use of the materials used as they experience the formal elements of this piece. With knowledge of the artist’s intent as well as the research that went into the creation of the artwork, viewers might question the impact of industry and consumption.

Sea and Space Explorations
4755 York Blvd, LA, CA 90042
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Gallery is open **Sundays 1-5 PM** and by appointment
Tel.: 323-445-4015. email: info@seaandspace.org

DIRECTIONS from Los Angeles: From the 5, take the 2 north. Take the Verdugo Road exit. Left onto Eagle Rock Boulevard. Right onto York Boulevard (major cross street is Armadale Boulevard).

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