

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jason Covert

CARNIVORA

September 16 – October 8, 2010

**Press Preview: Thursday, September 16, 2010, 4 – 6pm
Reception 6 – 8pm; CD Listening Party 8 – 10pm**

Artist Brunch/Q&A with Ann Landi: Saturday, September 25, 2010, 11am – 2pm

Closing Party: Thursday, October 7, 2010, 7 – 10pm

Location: 540 W 28th St +aRt NYC, NY 10001; between 10th and 11th Avenues

Days/Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 11am – 6pm

Contact: Spencer Chandler - 212.594.6464, spencer@canneryworks.org

For more information, please visit: www.jasoncovert.com/carnivora

Cannery Works, chashama, and +aRt are proud to present the world debut of **Jason Covert's CARNIVORA**. Located at chashama's newest donated space in Chelsea, **CARNIVORA** is a cross-disciplinary exhibition of photography, illustration, sculpture, painted works, ceremonial artifacts and robes, poetry and literature, jewelry, as well as original musical compositions – all inspired by the 2004 discovery in Siorapaluk, Greenland of a series of rocky substrate slabs bearing markings indicative of a hitherto unknown Proto-Eskimo culture and language.

"If true, history as we know it is about to change – dramatically," said Dr. Brian Lassengal, director of the expedition responsible for the discovery.

Drawing inspiration from the myth fragments now commonly known as "The Sacred Texts of Carnivora" (which if deemed authentic would predate the earliest known cuneiform writings by some 5,000 years), Covert applies his renowned skills as illustrator, designer, painter, photographer, and writer to weave fantasy and archaeology into a compelling narrative diorama, presenting to viewers both invitation and challenge: to imagine the vanished world suggested by those texts, and to question civilization's claim to know its own history.

Ann Landi, contributing editor of *ARTnews* writes, **"I can think of few (artists) who have so carefully constructed the remnants of a "lost" world in such a vivid way that we enter its spirit and almost wish we could become a part of it."** (Landi's full text is at the end of this release.)

While these "Sacred Texts" may have been set down several millennia prior to humanity's previously recorded emergence of writing, what Covert and his art have to tell us about our own era is just as startling. Can we – as a civilization, taking direction from Socrates – truly claim to know our history, to "know ourselves"? Or is that other sage, Picasso, correct, and is all art merely a lie created in order to reveal a truth?

Landi Article

Every small child with any imagination whatsoever finds a way to invent a universe parallel and generally preferable to the humdrum world in which he finds himself growing up. We invent friends, houses, towns, rituals, wardrobes, rules—flights of fancy constrained only by the limits of what we know and what we've seen at a young age.

Then we have to grow up, regrettably, and we leave this self-made world behind. As an artist, Jason Covert has been fortunate enough to keep that inventive impulse alive, creating a culture and its artifacts from the whole cloth of his imagination. His “Carnivora” is a civilization so vivid in its particulars and in the history Covert has invented for its inhabitants that we can be easily fooled into believing it really existed. The jewelry and costumes, photographic “evidence” of body painting, the stained glass and light-box apparitions of a strange godlike creature—all tickle the memory with suggestions of cultures we have seen in our travels through museums, art history books, or even old copies of *National Geographic*. There are hints of Celtic design in the beautiful baubles Covert has fashioned, of Native American ritual in the costumes, and of Aboriginal or African customs in his photographs of “tattooed” men and women striking odd dance-like poses. We can almost be convinced, as Covert claims in “The Sacred Texts of Carnivora,” that this civilization indeed once existed and provided all the fundamentals of myth and ceremony to sustain a high level of creativity.

It's all a ruse, of course, but a startling and compelling one that forces us to question our peculiar need to ransack and study the cultures of “the other.” What are we learning from the experience and to what extent does our curiosity border on sentimentality and voyeurism?

There are many contemporary artists who engage in creating visual equivalents for invented realities—in some respects, that's an artist's job—but I can think of few who have so carefully constructed the remnants of a “lost” world in such a vivid way that we enter its spirit and almost wish we could become a part of it.

ARTIST BIO

In 1974 Jason Covert was born on the peninsula known as Cape Cod between a harbor and a marsh. Schooled at Connecticut College, graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, Covert worked for a time with the controversial Massachusetts based artist Barre Pinsky. After traveling the world, Covert landed in New York City (2000) and currently resides in Brooklyn. His work is found in many private collections. www.jasoncovert.com/carnivora

Cannery Works provides a springboard to launch the next wave of vital 21st century artists. Offering customized support for signature projects, Cannery Works nurtures early career artists and introduces their work to a wider audience. 1% of all monies related to CARNIVORA benefit The National MS Society. www.canneryworks.org

Since 1995, **chashama** has championed the movement to repurpose vacant properties in New York City; recycling them as artist studios, galleries, theaters, performance and experimental presentation venues, while simultaneously invigorating the surrounding community with an influx of innovative programs, culture, creativity and commerce. www.chashama.org

+aRt is a 13-story new construction building located at 540 West 28th Street. The development will feature 91 artfully designed condominium residences, from studios to three bedrooms ranging in price from \$490,000–\$2,300,000, and qualifies for the city's 421-A tax abatement program. www.540W28.com

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