

POSTMASTERS

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For immediate release:

September 8 – October 13, 2007

EDDO STERN

Opening reception: Saturday September 8, 6-8 p-m

Postmasters is pleased to announce the exhibition of new works by **EDDO STERN** opening on September 8. This is the artist's third solo show with the gallery. It will be on view until October 13 with the reception scheduled for Saturday, September 8, between 6 and 8 pm.

Los Angeles based Stern has been involved in video gaming culture as a practitioner and theorist for many years. He is presently on the faculty at California Institute of the Arts. The works in the show are a result of the artist's obsessive participation in online fantasy games, most recently a yearlong immersion (2000 hours played) in *World of Warcraft*, the most popular MMORPG (Massively Multiplayer Online Roleplaying Games) with more than 10 million players worldwide.

His new works - kinetic shadow sculptures and 3D computer animation videos - use a mash-up of documentary material from online forums, clip art, YouTube videos, midi music, electronics, and hand made puppets. They mine the online gaming world at its paradoxical extremes: on one hand, an untenable perversity of life spent slaying an endless stream of virtual monsters, on the other, an ultimate mirroring of the most familiar social dynamics. The struggles with masculinity, honor, aggression, faith, love and self worth are embroiled with the gameworld's vernacular aesthetics.

In "**Man, Woman, Dragon**" (kinetic sculpture), *World of Warcraft* is reduced to its core elements: the cult of Chuck Norris, female elves, and a slain dragon.

"**Best Flame War Ever (King of Bards vs. Squire Rex, June 2004)**" is a two channel 3D computer animation diptych recreating an online flame war about degrees of expertise around the computer fantasy game *Everquest*, as followed by the artist in June 2004. The specific points of contention may appear recondite at first glance, but gradually the unfolding narrative acquires an unexpected pathos and reveals a glimpse into the shifting codes of masculinity.

In "**Level sounds like Devil (BabyInChrist vs. His Father, May 2006)**" (computer animation), a teenager living with an adoptive Christian family posts the question to the online Christian forums: "Is World of Warcraft Evil?" The Community helps him reckon with the moral and spiritual dilemmas of reconciling his life in *World of Warcraft*, with the strict edits of his father and the challenges of following his new faith. As a new synthetic fantasy world encroaches on the territory of an established religion, the inner workings of faith, truth and the boundaries of reality begin to unravel.

In Postmasters' second gallery a monumental portal structure is erected. It houses a central projection sequence: found 3D animations of tunnels, wormholes, voids, and flythroughs – the iconic abstractions of computer gaming's spatial aesthetics, a clichéd metaphor for timeless and endless transcendence.

*Postmasters Gallery located at 459 west 19th street between 9 and 10 Avenues is open Tuesday through Saturday 11 – 6 pm
Please contact Magdalena Sawon with questions and image requests
www.postmastersart.com e-mail : postmasters@thing.net*