

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXHIBITION: ADRIAN PACI: CENTRO DI PERMANENZA TEMPORANEA

RECEPTION: Saturday, November 10th, 7-9PM

ON VIEW: November 10th - December 22nd, 2007

HOURS: Wed. - Sun. 12 PM - 6 PM

Smith-Stewart is pleased to present CENTRO DI PERMANENZA TEMPORANEA, the solo New York gallery debut of Albanian-born Milan-based artist ADRIAN PACI.

Adrian Paci's body of work -- spanning video, sculpture, installation, photography and painting -- is shaped by his life experiences. Trained as a classical painter at the Art Academy in Tirana, his practice took a radical shift when he left Albania and began a new life in Milan. For him, art and life became interchangeable, one flowing into the other. Through his practice, Paci positions himself in socially charged situations, engaging his personal history in an effort to discover or recover how we live. By creating works situated in the everyday, Paci reveals how our lives are intersected and how we are bound by our environmental circumstance.

At Smith-Stewart, Paci presents the U.S. debut of "Centro Di Permanenza Temporanea", 2007, a single channel video installation. The title of the work refers to the camps in Italy that detain illegal immigrants. Paci's video reveals the plight of those displaced by war, poverty or inequality, the futile attempts to attain a destination they desire and ultimately the entrapping reality of a life caught between deportation and conflict. In doing so, Paci comments on the cruelty and even absurdity of our socio-political status, to expose how identity is determined by an evolving global reality.

The video's setting is an airport runway, where a large number of men and women are first seen approaching and then gathering on a mobile stairway, which appears to be attached to an airplane. But as the camera focuses in on the stairs and the crowd of ascending people and then slowly pans back, it is apparent that there is no waiting plane - just a stairway to nowhere.

The men and women are an island in the middle of an empty runway. In the sun-blasted distance, jets and planes take off and touch down, but they remain stranded in line with no destination. In our post-9/11 climate, our national identity has never been of greater significance, Paci's powerful portrait reveals the universal struggle of life in a permanent state of transition.

"Centro di Permanenza Temporanea" (2007) was produced during Adrian Paci's artist-in-residence at New Langton Arts, San Francisco.

In addition to the show at Smith-Stewart, Paci's new paintings and a video from 2002 will be featured in an exhibition at Peter Blum Chelsea, New York. For further information, please contact Simone Subal at chelsea@peterblumgallery.com. His work can also be seen in the group exhibition "Senso Unico" at P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York.

Adrian Paci was born in 1969 in Shkoder, Albania. He lives and works in Milan. In 2008, his work will be the subject of solo exhibitions at Kunstverein Hannover, Hannover, Bonnier Konsthall, Stockholm, CCA, Tel Aviv, and the Stuk, Leuven. Selected solo museum exhibitions include Milton Keynes Gallery, Dortmund Museum, Galleria Civica di Modena, BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht, P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center/MoMA, New York, Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, and the Moderna Museet, Stockholm. His work has also been included in the 15th Biennale of Sydney, 51st Venice Biennial, 2004 Biennale di Sevilla, 2003 Tirana Biennial and Manifesta 3, Lubiana.

SMITH-STEWART is located on 53 Stanton Street, between Forsyth and Eldridge Streets. Gallery Hours are Wednesday through Sunday from noon to six. The nearest subway stops are 2nd Avenue/Houston Street on the F and V lines, Grand Street on the B and D lines and Bleecker Street on the 6 line. For more information, please contact the gallery at amy@smith-stewart.com, 212.477.2821. Or visit the website: www.smith-stewart.com.