ABOUT THE FIRST WINNERS OF THE ALTOIDS® AWARD

Ei Arakawa works with numerous participants, combining dance, improvised actions, and objects to create a new genre of performance. The product of Arakawa's process is not quite an artwork and not quite a sculpture, but is constantly shifting between the two. Arakawa was born in Iwaka, Japan, in 1977, and currently lives and works in New York City. He earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from the School of Visual Arts, New York, in 2004, and a master of fine arts degree in film and video from Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, in 2006. From 2005 to 2006, he participated in the Studio Program at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Arakawa has exhibited, performed, and screened his work internationally, most recently at Performa07; at the Royal College of Art in London; and at Reena Spaulings Fine Art in New York, among others. Ei Arakawa was nominated by Matt Keegan.

After his exposure to civil rights protesting as a child, **Michael Patterson-Carver** has been committed to create works that engage in a personal form of political activism. Slightly naïve, always strangely obsessive, Patterson-Carver's color drawings of picketing and political protests paint a small history of dissent that is simultaneously comical, ironic, and profoundly human. Most recently the artist has started a series of drawings that read like allegories of destruction or chronicles of complex conspiracy theories often starring George W. Bush and Osama bin Laden. Born in Chicago, Illinois in 1958, Patterson-Carver lives and works in Portland, Oregon, where he first started presenting his works on the streets. Developed completely outside the traditional system of contemporary art, Patterson-Carver's work has only recently been shown in galleries and institutions, appearing at small A projects, Portland; White Columns, New York; and at the ICA, London. Michael Patterson-Carver was nominated by Harrell Fletcher.

Lauren Kelley uses stop-motion animation to explore stereotypes of femininity and race. By using her voice to speak for a cast of black dolls, Kelley breathes life into plastic characters while poignantly and humorously addressing issues such as gender, womanhood, and the human condition. Whether telling stories of unplanned pregnancy or exploring the world of flight attendants, Kelley's work introduces its viewers to a world in which dolls and puppets are caught in endless streams of consciousness and are trapped in a bizarre theater of the absurd. Kelley was born in 1972 in Baltimore, Maryland, and currently lives and works in Houston, Texas. She earned a bachelor of fine arts degree from the Maryland Institute College of Art, and a master of fine arts degree from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her work has been shown at the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston, and The Dallas Contemporary, among others. In 2007, she had residencies at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and the Glassel School of Art. Kelley's work is in the collection of the African American Museum, Dallas, Texas. Kelley has also experimented with new ways to distribute her work, broadcasting her videos through Houston's public access television to affectively reach an audience far beyond the art world. Lauren Kelley was nominated by Rick Lowe.

Inspired by the Free Cinema movement, **Michael Stickrod** creates films that compose an ever-expanding family album. Stickrod layers footage of his relatives with homemade soundtracks, found audio, and photographed and scanned objects to make videos that paint an unsettling portrait of middle America. At times candid and sincere, other times manipulative and voyeuristic, Stickrod's films are suspended somewhere between confessional home videos and anthropological field research. Stickrod was born in 1978 in Columbus, Ohio, and currently lives and works in New Haven, Connecticut. He earned a bachelor of fine arts from Ohio State University in 2003, and a master of fine arts degree in 2005 from Yale University. Stickrod has participated in several group exhibitions in the U.S., most recently at Newman Popiashvili, New York, and the Center for Contemporary Art in New Haven. In 2007, he received the Connecticut Commission on Culture & Tourism Grant. Michael Stickrod was nominated by Jay Heikes.