

PETER HENNESSEY**MY HELL'S GATE****5 February - 27 February 2010**

Drawing on the murky and highly litigious history of explosives, Melbourne-based artist Peter Hennessey will be creating a major new performance installation for GCAS. For this exhibition *My Hell's Gate*, Hennessey will be restaging the blast which announced the beginning of the era of explosives, Hell's Gate NYC. In a perspex vitrine in the gallery space containing a tonne of water, he will undertake a reduced scale recreation of the 1861 blast which remained the largest man-made explosion until the atomic bomb. The project reflects on the huge but strangely invisible role that explosives play in the modern era.



Hennessey's work is well known for its ambitious scale. His vast technically brilliant sculptural constructions reflect his obsession with the extraordinary products of the space race and warfare often exploring the thin edge of fanaticism. *My Hell's Gate* builds on ideas explored in his major 2008 Melbourne Art Fair commission *My Humvee (inversion therapy)*. In both of these works Hennessey draws attention to contemporary emblems that are potent symbols of both consumer culture and Western military excesses, highlighting the co-dependence between the two in contemporary culture and technology.

Hennessey has shown his work extensively with major solo exhibitions at Kandada, Tokyo, (2007); Perth Institute for Contemporary Arts (PICA), (2005); ACMI, (2003) and Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne, (2005-2008). His work has also featured in numerous group exhibitions internationally including *DE Overkant*, Den Haag Sculpture, The Hague (2007) and *ARCO*, Madrid (2006). Peter Hennessey is represented by Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne and Greenaway Gallery, Adelaide.

IMAGE CREDITS: *My Burnt Frost, (Explosion Event) # 2 and #3*, 2008, C-Type print, 72 x 105cm. Images courtesy of the artist and Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne

For further information or images, please contact Emily Cormack

T: +61 3 9419 3406 F: +61 3 9419 2519 E: emily@gertrude.org.au www.gertrude.org.au
Gertrude Contemporary Art Spaces 200 Gertrude Street Fitzroy VIC 3065 Australia