



INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART  
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
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INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART  
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**NEWS RELEASE**

## JAY HEIKES

SEPTEMBER 7–DECEMBER 16, 2007

OPENING RECEPTION: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 6-8PM  
EXHIBITION WALKTHROUGH WITH ARTIST JAY HEIKES AND ASSOCIATE CURATOR  
JENELLE PORTER: THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 5-6PM,  
*ICA MEMBERS ONLY*



top: *So There's This Pirate 1300 (still 1300)*, 2005, tempera, marker, and graphite on photocopy, 30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of the artist, Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York, and Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago.

bottom: *So There's This Pirate 1300 (detail)*, 2005, tempera, marker, and graphite on photocopy, 30 x 40 inches. Courtesy of the artist, Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York, and Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago.

### PHILADELPHIA, PA

For his first solo museum show, Jay Heikes will produce a unique installation on view September 7–December 16, 2007 in the Project Space which may include the following elements: a cement and brass “bed of nails,” a digital cuckoo clock, a freezer wall, drawings and a stylized rat trap. These elements are among the “props” used to activate stories, puns, and a kind of deadpan humor that have appeared in past iterations of an ongoing work inspired by a rather arcane joke.

For the past couple of years, Heikes has been telling a joke—the same joke, over and over. The joke is about an impatient pirate and a smart-alecky parrot: “So there’s this pirate...” it begins. Early in the process, Heikes performed the joke, videotaped it, and from there, employed an approach to transform the joke into a formal element in his drawings, sculpture and installation work. Over time, the joke has become a generative device, distilled in its visual components, which in turn have become Heikes’ aesthetic language. The artist says:

By telling the same joke over and over, I’ve realized its rigid structure allows me to find totally new directions every time I make this delivery—like splats and circles that relate to the art movements such as Pop Art and Expressionism. Eventually I imagine the narrative of the joke to be totally irrelevant and the stills to exist as a kind of green screen—a forum where any abstraction of the narrative exists as a collage within it.

At ICA, he will present what is the eighth re-telling of the joke, now bordering on complete independence from the original narrative.

Jay Heikes (b. 1975, Princeton, NJ, lives Minneapolis and New York) received his MFA from Yale University in 2005. His work was the subject of a solo show at Artists Space in 2003. Last year his work was included in the 2006 Whitney Biennial, and was represented in a three-person show at the Walker Art Center. His work is in the permanent collection of the Walker Art Center and the Altoids Collection at the New Museum of Contemporary Art. It was also part of the publication roundup *Ice Cream: Contemporary Art in Culture*, (Phaidon 2007).

This exhibition is organized by Associate Curator Jenelle Porter, and will be accompanied by a brochure publication.

### CONTACT

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\*checklist and images available upon request.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

ICA is located at:  
118 South 36th Street at the  
University of Pennsylvania

ICA is open to the public, except during  
installation, from 12pm to 8pm on  
Wednesday through Friday and from 11am  
to 5pm on Saturday and Sunday.

Admission is \$6 for adults, \$3 for students  
over 12, artists, and senior citizens; and  
free to ICA members, children 12 and  
under, PENN card holders, and on Sundays  
from 11am to 1pm.

For more information,  
call 215-898-7108/5911, or visit  
[www.icaphila.org](http://www.icaphila.org).

### **INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART**

Founded in 1963, the Institute of  
Contemporary Art at the University of  
Pennsylvania is a leader in the  
presentation and documentation of  
contemporary art. Through exhibitions,  
commissions, educational programs, and  
publications, ICA invites the public to share  
in the experience, interpretation and  
understanding of the work of established  
and emerging artists.

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INFORMATION ON PROGRAMS IN CONJUNCTION WITH JAY HEIKES.**