

# Ronald Feldman Fine Arts

**Brandon Ballengée**

For Immediate Release: February 10, 2015

## ***The Frameworks of Absence, 2006 - Ongoing*** **Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, Booth 844 at Pier 94**

*We stand guard over works of art, but species representing the work of eons are stolen from under our noses.*  
Aldo Leopold (1887-1948) from his textbook "Game Management," 1933.

Brandon Ballengée, artist/biologist/environmental activist, will transform the Feldman Gallery booth into a space to mourn the massive extinction of species, often referred to as the Holocene or Sixth Great Extinction, which continues at an alarming rate. Pioneering in ecological art, Ballengée has been described by the critic and curator Kim Levin "as taking these issues to a new level of intensity." He conceptualizes material of great consequence, and the installation is both a cri du coeur and a call to action that balances the evocative with the proactive.

Responding to this cataclysm, Ballengée physically cut images of missing animals from historic prints and publications printed at the time in history when the depicted species became extinct. The booth takes on the appearance of a miniature museum, displaying the altered prints by John James Audubon, Mark Catesby, John Gould, J.G. Keulemans, Ernst Haeckel, Louis Agassiz Fuertes, and others hung in chronological order from 1660 to 2014. The prints depict familiar images of over 100 now extinct species, including the Rocky Mountain sheep, Ivory-billed woodpecker, Great auk, Maryland darter, Carolina parakeet, and the Sloanes Urania butterfly. Giving form to absence, Ballengée's cut-outs expose the bare wall in the shape of these extinct species.

Ashes in vials of the cut-out images burnt by the artist to simulate cremated remains can be ceremoniously scattered or saved as part of the mourning process when acquiring an altered print. This transformative component of the installation, *Actions of Mourning*, deepens an empathetic response to the annihilation of forms of life that are less physically present in our post-technological society.

Two other series are represented on outside walls of the booth. *DFA 186: Hades*, from his ongoing series *Malamp: The Occurrence of Deformities in Amphibians* (1996-ongoing), presents a large unique scanner photograph of a terminally deformed frog as a reliquary to a short-lived non-human life. In response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the video *Committed*, exhibited at Ronald Feldman Fine Arts in 2012, overlays BP's TV "infomercials" with scientific rebuttals. The video is available to Armory visitors at no charge.

A portion of proceeds from Ballengée's "Frameworks of Absence" will support the Natural Resources Defense Council's (NRDC) efforts to defend and protect endangered wildlife and wild places.

\*\*\*

An exhibition by Brandon Ballengée is on view at the National Academy of Sciences, Washington DC through April 29, 2015. A survey of his work was mounted by the Chateau de Chamarande, Essonne (France) in 2013 and traveled to Het Domein in Sittard (Netherlands), which is co publishing a monograph of his work with Lafayette College (USA) and The Shrewsbury Museum (England) in 2015. His installation *Love Motel for Insects* was exhibited in Central Park in 2013. His work has been included in Documenta, Venice Biennale, Moscow Biennale, Prospect New Orleans 2, and the Electronic Arts Biennale in Australia.

**A panel discussion on Environmentalist Art with Brandon Ballengée, artist and biologist; Roel Arkesteijn, curator of contemporary art, Museum Het Domein, Sittard, Netherlands; Elizabeth Corr, manager, Art Partnerships, Natural Resources Defense Council; moderated by Suzaan Boettger, art historian, Bergen Community College. Friday, March 6, Mezzanine Lounge Pier 92, 12:30 - 1:30 PM.**

\*\*\*

A press kit with more information can be found at: <http://bit.ly/1DG1nYY>  
For more information contact Casey Dorobek at (212) 226-3232 or [casey@feldmangallery.com](mailto:casey@feldmangallery.com)

31 Mercer Street, New York, New York 10013  
212 226-3232 fax 212 941-1536 [www.feldmangallery.com](http://www.feldmangallery.com)