

Press Release:

Martha Otero Gallery  
820 N Fairfax Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90046  
t. 323 951 1068  
f. 323 951 9222  
gallery@marthaotero.com  
www.marthaotero.com

Jeff Sonhouse

*'Better Off Dead,' Said The Landlord*

Opening Reception: Saturday, September 11, 2010, from 6 to 9 pm

September 11 – October 23, 2010

Martha Otero is pleased to present New York based artist Jeff Sonhouse's exhibition, *'Better Off Dead,' Said The Landlord*. For his Los Angeles solo debut, Sonhouse deconstructs the accepted theories of ownership and invites us to reexamine how we interpret relationships of power, as tenants of an overbearing architect. With alluding portrayals of glorified facades, he creates a frictional energy of immortality.

The exhibition will include Sonhouse's recent portraits of oracular figures that evoke familiarity, such as "Papi Shampoo", bearing a Jesus like stance and demeanor. We're instantly drawn to the silky smooth satin textured vestment and its vividly deep aquamarine and violet colors. Draped over a brash black and white pinstripe suit with ashen hands in an iconic Pantocrator posture. The background palette harmonizes burgundy with black, phthalo blues and rich purples into a contemporary vision of a halo. Maintaining his ingenious approach to mixed media, we see meticulous hair constructed of matches and steel wool combined with composite figures of oil paint. Sonhouse's unorthodox use of materials successfully disorients the viewers prescribed sense of space. Even more irresistible are Sonhouse's masks and the intense gaze concealed behind them.

Jeff Sonhouse was born in 1968 in New York where he currently lives and works. He received his BFA from the School of Visual Arts, New York, and his MFA from Hunter College in 2001. He has exhibited at The Power Plant, Toronto, Canada; Jack Tilton Gallery, New York, NY; Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, NY; Jack Shainman Gallery, New York, NY; Samson Projects, Boston, MA; Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, Atlanta, GA; The New York Historical Society, New York, NY.

For further information, please contact Michell Newman at 323.951.1068 or visit our website [www.marthaotero.com](http://www.marthaotero.com)