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## **Gee's Bend & American Curios**

### **AT STREMMEL GALLERY**

Exhibition dates: February 11- March 13, 2010

Reception: Thursday, February 11, 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Open to the public.

On Thursday, February 11, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm, Stremmel Gallery will host an opening reception for the quilts of Gee's Bend and artist John Randall Nelson, ***American Curios***.

Praised by the New York Times as "some of the most miraculous works of modern art America has produced," the abstract quilts from the tiny, isolated African-American community of Gee's Bend, Alabama, prompted a rethinking of commonly accepted artistic categories. Throughout much of the twentieth century, making quilts was considered a domestic responsibility for the African-American women in Gee's Bend, an area of Rehoboth and Boykin, Alabama. As young girls, many of the women trained or apprenticed in their craft with their mothers, female relatives, or friends. The town's women developed a distinctive, bold, and sophisticated quilting style based on traditional American (and African American) quilts, but with a geometric simplicity reminiscent of Amish quilts and modern art. In 1937 and '38, the federal government commissioned two series of photographs of Gee's Bend. The images have since become some of the most famous images of Depression-era American life. This exhibition of the Gee's Bend quilts is in correlation with the exhibition at the Nevada Museum of Art, which will be on display February 6- April 11, 2010.

Living in Tempe Arizona, John Randall Nelson has synthesized his illustration and sculptural experience into a unique body of work that combines painting, drawing, video, sculpture, and text. He is known for taking simple, yet bold, instantly recognized images of everyday symbols that function like words in a sentence. By manipulating the relationship between form and symbolism, Nelson encourages viewers to create connections, to assert their own ideas and interpretations. He emphasizes primitive and simplified images, exploring the art historical styles of imagism, tribal and folk art.

On Thursday, February 11, 2010, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm, the public is invited to the opening reception to view the work of John Randall Nelson and the Gee's Bend quilts. This exhibition will continue through March 13. Stremmel Gallery is located at 1400 S. Virginia Street. Gallery hours are Monday through Friday, from 9:00 am to 5:30 pm, and Saturday from 10 am to 3 pm. For more information, contact Stremmel Gallery at 775-786-0558, [www.stremmelgallery.com](http://www.stremmelgallery.com).

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