

Susan Jamison, *Trust in Me*
Courtney Jordan, *Restructuring*
September 15 - October 20

Opening reception with artists, Saturday, September 15, 6-8 PM

Irvine Contemporary is delighted to present two new solo exhibitions: Susan Jamison, *Trust in Me*, and Courtney Jordan, *Restructuring*. Both exhibitions open Saturday, September 15 and extend through October 20. Opening reception with artists, Saturday, September 15, 6-8 PM.



Susan Jamison, *Trust in Me*, 2007. Egg tempera and ink transfer on panel. 36 X 36 inches.

Susan Jamison, *Trust in Me*

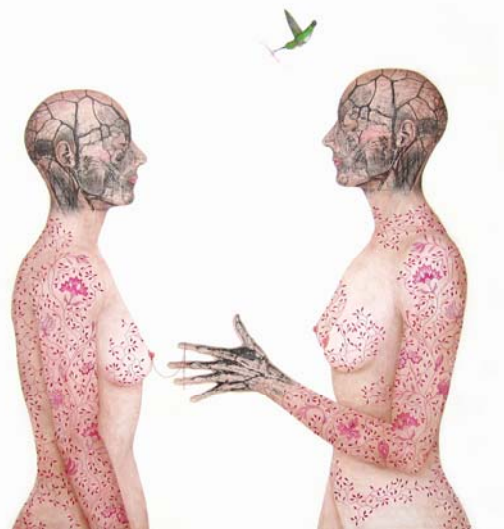
In *Trust in Me*, Susan Jamison's second solo exhibition at Irvine Contemporary, the artist presents a new series of egg tempera paintings that extend her signature approach to the female figure through provocative new imagery on dark tempera grounds. Jamison uses large-scale panels to depict fantasy worlds that appear both timeless and of our own moment. Jamison combines two classic forms: the portrait, in a traditional Renaissance profile position, and panels reminiscent of Audubon and naturalist illustration and Asian art forms. The exquisitely rendered details in the paintings evoke a magical realism that balances naturalism with strikingly original allegories of the feminine.

Susan Jamison's paintings read like vivid dream states of the figures depicted in the compositions: animals, insects, birds, and objects of the women's world like needles, thread, and fabric, become symbolic projections of fantasies, fears, desires, and sexual longing. Like Fairy Tales and Renaissance allegory paintings, Jamison's imagery captures primal and archetypal emotions about

the body, sexual identity, and human relationships to the natural world. The paintings engage our ideas of exposure, touch, and vulnerability: the heads and faces of the figures, each with eyes closed, are "exposed" for our viewing through the use of early medical drawings of biological features of the human head. This exposure of an underlying layer of the body is a metaphor for disclosing the interior life of each female figure. The bodies of the female figures are also nude but decorated with traditional henna tattoo patterns that at once expose each figure and focus attention on the organic and sensual surface of the body. The compositions invite viewers into haunting imaginary spaces drawn from the artist's singular vision.

About the Artist

Susan Jamison has an MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design. She lives and works in Roanoke, VA.



Susan Jamison, *Forget Me Not*, 2007. Egg tempera and ink transfer on panel. 36 X 36 inches.



Courtney Jordan, *Module 1*, 2007. Ink and graphite on mylar. 14 X 18 inches.

if they were not familiar; it reproduces all that it represents." Without necessarily invoking Romantic transcendentalism, Jordan's drawings strip away the veil of familiarity from known structures to reveal our deep emotional connectedness to the built forms of everyday life, in which we live, move, and have our being. Jordan's use of mylar as a drawing surface allows her to create a sense of transparency with overlapping planes of space that makes the familiar structures unfamiliar. Her works compel us to rediscover the value of common architectural forms and our sense of place in a complex over-built, industrialized, and structured world.

Reminiscent of Julie Mehretu's use of simultaneously exploding and converging urban spaces, architecture, and networks, Courtney Jordan fragments multiple architectural and industrial forms into multiple planes of space that seem to be propelled by the paradoxical energies of the contemporary world. Her compositional elements also re-converge into a new vision, a Restructuring, a new visual poetics of today's humanly built environment.

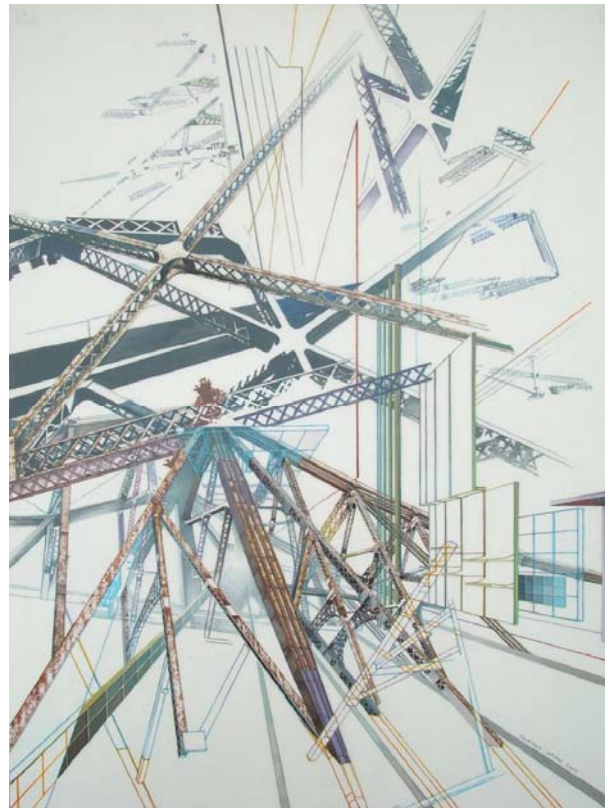
About the Artist

Courtney Jordan lives and works in Baltimore, MD. She has an MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art and a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design.

Courtney Jordan, *Restructuring*

For *Restructuring*, Courtney Jordan, who first exhibited with Irvine Contemporary in last year's *Introductions2* show, presents a new series of drawings in ink and graphite on mylar that reconceive architectural forms and structures from the human built environment. Jordan's subtle but complex works employ recognizable details of built structures and urban industrial infrastructure that are encoded with social and emotional values. Indeed, Jordan has created a new poetics of architectural form.

Percy Shelley wrote in *Defense of Poetry* that poetry "strips the veil of familiarity from the world, and lays bare [its] naked and sleeping beauty." Poetry, he continues, "makes familiar objects be as



Courtney Jordan, *Tachyon*, 2007. Ink and graphite on mylar. 16 1/2 X 12 inches.