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Gary Brotmeyer: "Thanks for the Fish!"

January 11 – March 1, 1997

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*Thanks for the Fish!*, an exhibition of altered found photographs and collages by **Gary Brotmeyer** will open at **Ubu Gallery** on January 11, 1997 and run through March 1st. Although not a photographer in the traditional sense (he doesn't take any photographs), Brotmeyer has a photographer's "eye." By transforming the specific reality of an existing photograph into some new "unreality" he is, as one critic put it, at once "logical, ridiculous and sly."

Avidly searching through thrift stores and flea markets, Brotmeyer seeks out cart-de-visite portraits and other old photographs by anonymous "masters." With witty and idiosyncratic spirit, he draws, paints, and then superimposes all manner of constructed objects and detritus upon them. The resulting works, meticulously and ingeniously engineered, comment wryly on art history, politics and popular culture and reflect Brotmeyer's take on the folly of the human condition. The titles—and often stories—that Brotmeyer attributes to his constructions and collages have an inventiveness and outrageousness all their own, which adds measurably to an appreciation of the works.

Brotmeyer has also begun to explore more systematically collages where a photograph does not provide the structure of the work. A number of these will be included in the exhibition as well. All of the works are on a small scale, creating an intimacy counter to the prevailing tendency in the contemporary art world toward the oversize. Cagney references abound and the viewer is well rewarded by studying the fine nuances and subtle details of the works.

Brotmeyer has participated in numerous museum and gallery exhibitions, including a prior exhibition at Ubu Gallery entitled *Interventions: Four Approaches to Contemporary Photography* in early 1995 and a solo exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago in late 1989/early 1990. His works are in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art; the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Baltimore Museum of Art; and the Art Institute of Chicago, as well as many private collections.