



News Release

9/12/2008 1:12:24 PM

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Sept. 8, 2008

Joey Skaggs, Notorious Artist and Satirist, to Conduct Workshops on “Social Activism through Media Manipulation” and a public presentation “Media: Politics, Power & Persuasion” at Murray State University Sept. 18 & 19, 2008.

Joey Skaggs, one of “the most prolific independent media satirists in America today,” to work with students in workshops focusing on the media’s changing landscape and to speak to public about media manipulation.

THINK TANK Art Exhibit “Sneak Preview” immediately after Skaggs Presentation!

Murray, Ky. – Artist Joey Skaggs, who is known for his outrageous pranks, hoaxes, and reality hacking, will be on the Murray State University campus Sept. 18 and 19 conducting workshops with students and an evening presentation.

Since the sixties, he has convinced the media throughout the world that his staged news events are real and newsworthy. Examples of his international hoaxes include: *The Fat Squad*, *The Celebrity Sperm Bank*, *The Cockroach Vitamin Cure*, and *The Cathouse for Dogs*. Unfortunately, journalists in many countries have believed and written about his fake events; taking the bait hook, line and sinker! He has fooled major media outlets such as CNN, *The New York Times*, Fox News, *Good Morning America*, and Geraldo Rivera.

“I hold a mirror up to society to illustrate how disinformation that is fed to the media is consequently fed by the media to the public,” Skaggs, explains. “I show, by example, how vulnerable the public is to abuses of a media that is largely owned by giant conglomerate corporations for whom the bottom line is the first priority – not objective news coverage.”

On Sept. 18 and 19, 2008, Skaggs will conduct his workshop entitled, “Social Activism through Media Manipulation” for students in mass communication classes.

“The topics that Skaggs is passionate about – pursuing a life of inquiry, openness and social responsibility -- are perfect for our students,” Dr. Lochte, chair of the MSU Department of Journalism & Mass Communications, stated.

On Thursday Sept. 18 at 6 p.m., Skaggs will speak about “Media: Politics, Power and Persuasion” in the Fine Arts Building, 6th floor auditorium. The program is open to the community.

Immediately following the presentation, the audience is invited to preview the **Think Tank Art Exhibit** created by nationally-known artists, expressing their views about pop culture and politics in a variety of art forms.

“The idea for the exhibition came from the U.S. presidential campaigns and election,” Becky Atkinson, Gallery Director, MSU Department of Art, explained; “but the call for entries was open to people all over the world. Artists were asked to submit work dealing with any political topic.”

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Skaggs at Murray State University
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“Most of the artists in the show are from throughout the U.S., and one is from Hong Kong,” Atkinson, continued. “The issues the artists portray in their work range from war, hunger, the prison system, the environment, immigration and the political process itself, just to name a few. The goal in selecting the work was to choose pieces that would inspire thought and discussion.”

The programs are sponsored by the Murray State University Department of Journalism & Mass Communications, College of Business & Public Affairs, The Art Department, College of Humanities and Fine Arts, and the Office of the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Today, people are accustomed to the 24-hour news cycle, transparency in communications online, and expressing their views on the Internet.

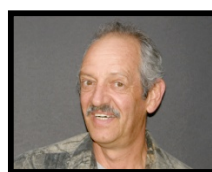
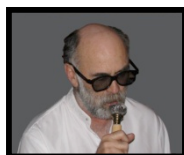
“Students have to be aware of the blurring lines between information, infotainment and entertainment. When faculty teach students what makes something newsworthy,” Dr. Lochte, explained, “they must explain that the sensational piece about 'The Fat Squad' which aired on a major network’s news magazine program was not a hard news story. It was a hoax! The hoaxes Skaggs creates demonstrate how easy it is to convince the media to follow a lead if it has the right hype. His goal is to make people think, and we hope he will provoke some new thinking at MSU.”

To learn more about Skaggs visit his website: <http://www.joeyskaggs.com> and his blog, *The Art of the Prank* at <http://pranks.com>. To review descriptions of his past performances visit: <http://www.joeyskaggs.com/html/retsub.html>.

The Department of Journalism & Mass Communication, established in 1975, is one of only 114 programs in the United States accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications. It is part of the College of Business & Public Affairs and offers four majors: advertising, electronic media, journalism and public relations.

The Department of Art & Design, established in 1934, is one of 280 programs in the United States accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design. It is part of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts and offers the following areas of emphasis: art education, ceramics, drawing, furniture design, graphic design, metals, painting, photography, printmaking, and sculpture.

For information about the Skaggs events at Murray State University, contact Robin Orvino at 270.809.5308 or robin.orvino@murraystate.edu.



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“Joey Skaggs is coming.....
We don’t know which one it will be.”

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