



## Press Packet

*For immediate release*

**EXHIBITION:** “ALAVs 2.0 (Autonomous Light Air Vessels)”

**LOCATION:** The Beall Center for Art and Technology

**PRESS BRIEFING:** By Appointment. Contact Eleanore Stewart at 949 824-8945

**OPENING RECEPTION:** Thursday, April 5, 2007, 6:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m. Meet the artist. Free and open to the public.

**ADDRESS:**

University of California, Irvine  
Claire Trevor School of the Arts  
712 Arts Plaza  
Irvine, CA 92697-2775

**HOURS:**

Tuesday - Wednesday, 12 – 5 p.m.  
Thursday - Saturday, 12 – 8 p.m.

**GENERAL CONTACT:**

(949) 824-4339  
<http://beallcenter.uci.edu>

**BRIEF OVERVIEW**

The Beall Center for Art and Technology is pleased to present this year’s featured *Emerging Artist*, Jed Berk. Jed has received immediate, critical acclaim on the Discovery Channel. His work, “ALAVs 2.0 (Autonomous Light Air Vessels),” on display **April 3, 2007 – May 19, 2007**, combines communication technologies with playful design. The result is a flock of interactive blimps (ALAVs) that delight the senses and provoke the mind. The Beall Center is free and open to the public.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

*"The interactivity allowed by emerging technologies is one of the hallmarks of new media arts. The ALAVs, however, are more than an interactive artwork. They vividly illustrate the human impulse to relate and engage with other "living," responsive creatures--it's impossible to see these small playful creatures and not want to get to know them. Computer scientists are remaking the world, programming intelligence into everyday objects and creating systems of these intelligent objects. Artists like Jed Berk imagine one of the possible futures of this new world."* Eleanore Stewart

## ARTIST'S STATEMENT

*"The ALAVs were developed through an extended research process during which I added complex behaviors and interactions. They are part of a networked system that emphasizes the concept of connectivity among people, objects, and the environment. With this model, people become active members of the ecology through interactive engagements with the flock. With the use of mobile technologies, people can influence the behavior of the ALAVs by starting conversations and building closer relationships with them. Each participant can call the ALAVs using their mobile phones and interact with them either as a "friend" or a "foe." They are also given the opportunity to converse with the entire group or an individual ALAV. In addition, each person who participates will effect an overall evolving group behavior referred to as the "happiness factor." By giving form to invisible and intangible networks, the ALAVs speculate on a near future co-existence with artificial life forms. Through the development of a unique ecosystem, they reflect a possible vision of the near future and the current state of connectivity in our everyday lives."* Jed Berk

## ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

Born in New York in 1973, Jed Berk lives in Los Angeles, CA. He received a BFA from Rhode Island School of Design and an MFA from Art Center College of Design. He has shown in the US and internationally in institutions such as Beall Center of Art and Technology, Irvine, CA; Art Center Nabi, Seoul, Korea; ACM, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA; and Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, CA. Jed's work has also reached a broad audience with the ALAVs international television debut on the Discovery Network.

Berk explores ideas related to nature, particularly the transient point where evolution might occur. He employs the use of emerging technologies in his art to create semi-domesticated, biologically inspired sculptures that live in network-based ecosystems. His overarching interest is in developing works that transcend language and cultural barriers and reflecting upon the current state of globalization.

## ASSOCIATED EVENTS

Please also join us for our participation in the county-wide arts festival, the **Imagination Celebration**, as we explore the concepts of Jed's work with our younger audience members during our **Family Day on April 21, 2007, 11:00am – 3:00pm.**

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, IMAGES, AND RESOURCES**

<http://www.alavs.com/>

<http://degree119.com/>

[http://www.alavs.com/videos/video\\_20.html](http://www.alavs.com/videos/video_20.html)

<http://flickr.com/photos/56961858@N00/sets/> (images only)

*Tours by Beall Interns are available free of charge during business hours*

*Private group tours available by appointment: contact Cat Moore at [cmoore@uci.edu](mailto:cmoore@uci.edu)*