



Contact: Julie Hooker Baker
Director of Community & Corporate Relations
435.649.8882 ext 112
development@kimball-art.org

For Immediate Release

Cookies and Candies and Cakes, Oh, My—All at the Kimball Art Center, Kent Christensen: *Sugar*

Park City, UT, April 8, 2008—In conjunction with his exhibit, *Sugar*, Kent Christensen will present *The Dessert Landscape*, an Art Talk at the Kimball Art Center on Friday, April 25th from 5:00 – 6:00 pm. Christensen’s compositions have the capacity to be both social satire and part meditation of the spiritual possibilities of his experience and art. His works truly leave art lovers with their mouths watering.

“I’m really excited about exhibiting at the Kimball because it’s like coming home for me. Even though I’m really a California boy and have lived in New York for 20 years, culturally my work is centered in Utah, and Utah is where I come to get centered. The landscape of Utah has been featured in my work since I started painting sugar in 2004. They are kind of a perfect match, salty/sweet - if that makes any sense?” notes Christensen.

Almost forty paintings featuring everything from Pez to taffy to ice-cream hang in the Badami Gallery at the Kimball Art Center. Each of his painting connects to an experience or fond memory.

“Everyone can relate to food and everyone can really relate to indulgence. There is something of the element of surprise that also operates on people when they look at my work. A simple painting of a familiar object, like chocolates or candy corn or an ice cream cone can conjure up sensory memories that are surprisingly powerful and intense. When you add the landscape component it makes the reaction even more potent and complex. The juxtaposition of a specific landscape context on what would otherwise be a simple still life creates a lot of possibilities and people relate to the paintings in ways that surprise even me. They bring their own specific history to the experience,” adds Christensen.

Christensen’s work is on exhibit in both London and New York. He notes, In London, there is the added fascination with American culture. We forget that they don’t have things like candy corn, salt water taffy and Hershey’s kisses over there. Even their valentine candies are different. And they certainly don’t eat Jell-O the way we do. Last year my London show opened the day before Valentine’s and I took over a suitcase full of “conversation hearts” and salt water taffy for the opening. The taffy was a huge hit. They just gobbled it up. Perhaps it’s that sense of participation that makes the work appealing to people. They can be looking at a painting of the Spiral Jetty made out of colorful spiral taffy while eating the actual taffy. Its sensory overload on a level you don’t usually experience in the gallery.”

Christensen said, “When I tell people I’m at the Kimball, there is instant recognition. The Kimball is truly the permanent home of Art in Park City, and one of the major Art Centers of Utah. All my friends in New York who come out here to ski know the Kimball. After all, one can only ski so much, and the Kimball’s programs are amazing!”

Interviews and photos available upon request.