special thanks are due:
Ana Begoña Armengod
Hallie Boas
Ashley Brickman
Anna Busdiecker
Tesar Freeman
Rose Hermalin
Drew Lightfoot
Morgan Ress
Christina Rosas
Miller Schulman

participating Justseeds artists:
Santiago Armengod (Mexico City, Mexico)
Kevin Caplicki (Brooklyn, NY)
Alec “Icky” Dunn (Pittsburgh, PA)
Molly Fair (Brooklyn, NY)
Thea Gahr (Portland, OR)
Nicolas Lampert (Milwaukee, WI)
Josh MacPhee (Brooklyn, NY)
Colin Matthes (Milwaukee, WI)
Dylan Miner (Lansing, MI)
Roger Peet (Portland, OR)
Jesse Purcell (Montreal, Quebec, Canada)
Erik Ruin (Providence, RI)
Shaun Slifer (Pittsburgh, PA)
Meredith Stern (Providence, RI)
Mary Tremonte (Pittsburgh, PA)
Pete Yahnke Railand (Santa Fe, NM)
Bec Young (Pittsburgh, PA)

2011 PITTSBURGH BIENNIAL
Sept. 16 - Dec. 11, 2011
Miller Gallery at Carnegie Mellon University
Purnell Center for the Arts
5000 Forbes Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
412.268.3618
www.cmu.edu/millergallery

HOURS:
Tues.-Sun., 12-6pm
Closed Mondays

ADMISSION:
Free and open to the public
For this installation within the 2011 Pittsburgh Biennial, the Justseeds Artists’ Cooperative created a series of mock billboards, largely from scrap materials and with simplistic construction. Working loosely with themes of immigration and international borders, the individual artists generated images that toy with the concept of billboard advertising: whether simply using the standard horizontal rectangle as a springboard for messaging that parallels their usual printmaking methods, or by lampooning the billboard concept itself. Each billboard is a gesture towards mass messaging to the general public, sketching out a world open to graphic expression and debate, rather than one controlled by market capital. Many in Justseeds have worked graphically in the public sphere as non-commissioned “street” artists or as commissioned muralists, occasionally altering actual billboards where they stand—however, there are few in the co-op who are practicing painters or designers in the traditional sense.

Justseeds’ tactics for these billboards vary alongside their oft-divergent printing styles. Thea Gahr and Meredith Stern blow up their original small scale prints: Gahr’s linoleum print becomes a massive, hand-carved wood sheet illustrating a woman silently watching a refugee boat depart from shore. Stern’s “Tierra y Libertad” becomes a life-sized banner of a wood sheet illustrating a woman silently watching a refugee boat depart from shore. Stern’s “Tierra y Libertad” becomes a life-sized banner of a flag-bearer, collaged with remnants of other prints. Pete Railand’s cut-paper panorama, referential of his sketch-based linoleum-carved prints, illustrates a hardly imaginary, bleak landscape where pollutants permeate national and class borders with airborne ease. Alec “Icky” Dunn renders a freight train stocked with stowaway laborers, quietly adapting their mobility to the infrastructure of commercial transport. The young men in passionate embrace in Mary Tremonte’s billboard are similarly back-dropped by a steel train trestle, another mechanism of commercial movement and a symbol of the social borders defined by a prevailing white, hetero-normative culture. Nearby, a woman peers from behind a latticework of steel fencing, where Santiago Armengod offers another very human face to the struggle over boundaries both social and political. Within this humanist thread are both Dylan Miner’s illustration of an Anishinaabeg (Ojibwe) delegation to Washington, DC (1899) in pursuit of indigenous rights, and Bec Young’s shadow puppet-inspired diorama of contemporary Sudanese liberation—in the Dinka language of the Upper Nile, nomlau means “independence.”

Many billboards take a humorous approach, such as Colin Matthes’ bold, sardonic “Gladiator” advertisement for a portable border wall for nascent empires. Josh MacPhee’s vulture-as-American-icon is a comic illustration of the metaphorical qualities that we tend to prescribe to animals, particularly when, in the case of the endangered bald eagle, it serves the purposes of marketing a mythical national character. A “wel-