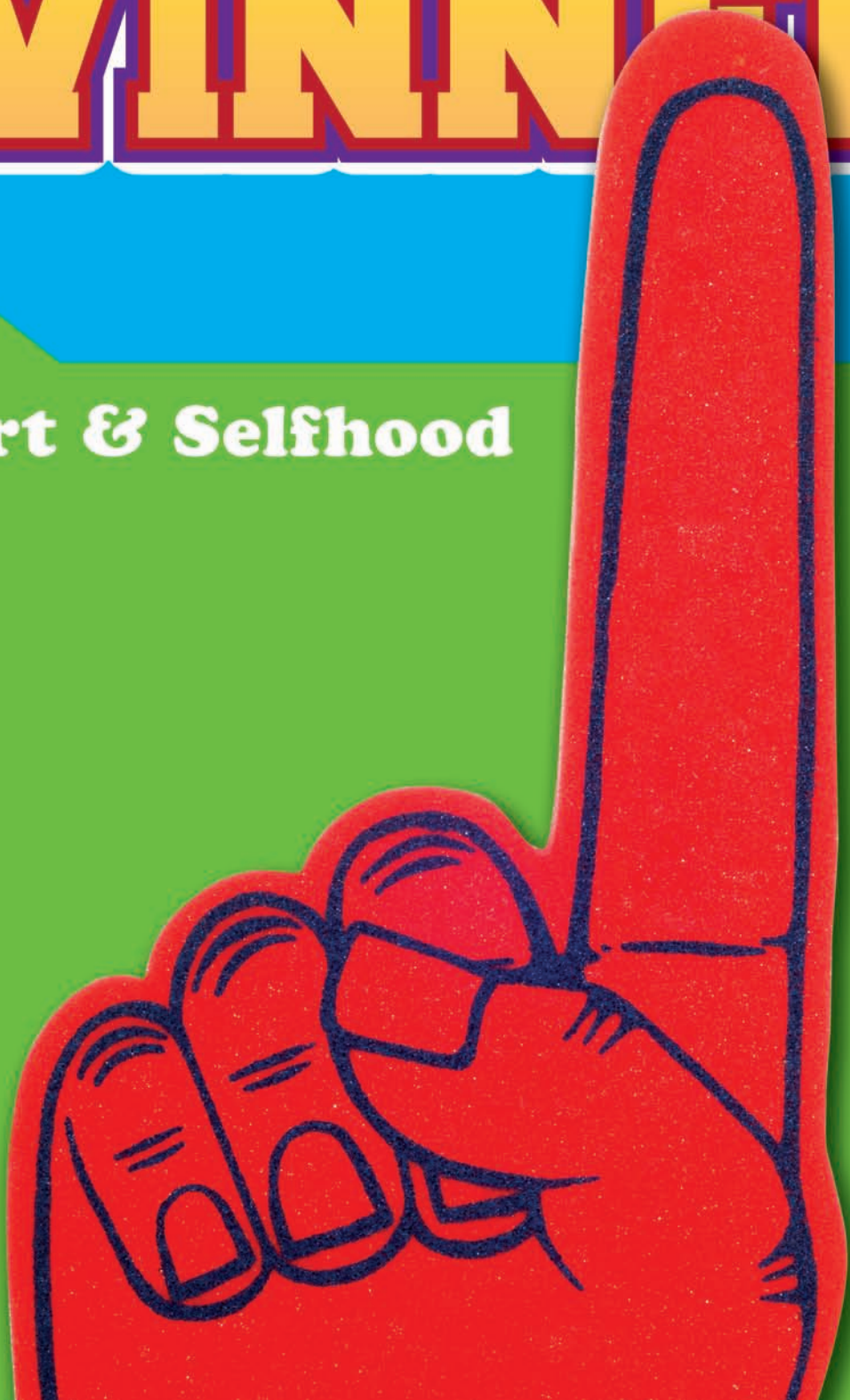


I LIKE WINNERS

Sport & Selfhood

01.09



Sheppard Fine Arts Gallery



I Like Winners: Sport and Selfhood

Curated by Marjorie Vecchio, PhD

Sheppard Fine Arts Gallery
University of Nevada, Reno
January 20 – February 13, 2009

TEAM:

Adam Taye
Arthur Gibbons
Ben Coonley
Caitlin Parker
Carlín Wing
Charles Fairbanks
Chris Carnel
David King
James Jaxxa
Jeffrey James Mohr
Jennifer Locke
Jesse Aron Green
Jim Finn
Jonathan VanDyke
Judy Linn
Lisa Young
Lucas Michael
Mara Bodis-Wollner
Marie Watt
Matthew Slaats
Project Moonshine
Rob Carter
Tad Beck
William Lamson
Young Jang

Why I Like Frescobol

Jesse Aron Green



I.

He's a winner, the biggest winner of all time. Make that modern times. Excuse me, the Modern Era, 1896 in Athens, the moment we started counting. His seventeen gold medals weigh about five pounds, and if tied to his feet along with a brick or two they might sink Michael Phelps to the bottom of an Olympic-size pool, where he would see me struggling after the mere attempt at a dive. I'm not a swimmer. I was trained on water, but hard and frozen, carving little contrails on the ice, hurling myself upward. Even then, more often than not, I'd land on my ass, wondering why I would do such a thing. Just like Ms. Kerrigan, crying why on American national television, over and over, a spectacle of disaster in repetition — like Vinko Bogataj's "Agony of Defeat" or the Louganis diving-board thwap — after a simple swat to the knee sank her to the floor.

On the other hand: I see bodies rising against gravity by some mechanical propulsion; of an ideal Icarus forever ascending, in an air so far from ground as to be without context except myth. This is the climax of Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia*, filmed on commission from Hitler. To see her divers framed against nothing but sky, not seeming to fall but fly, is to be asked to submit to the obverse of drowning that same diver.

Either projected upon an athlete or constructed by a filmmaker, fantasy only needs a spectator.

II.

A sadist would bind Phelps and dump him off a springboard. Less extreme is a guy who gets off on Schadenfreude, who would savor a simple defeat. Either way the result would be something to watch, as much as a victory (although NBC wisely trades on the latter). Point is, sport doesn't need winners or losers to be sport so much as it needs rules. Fair is Federer's loss to Nadal, Wimbledon '08. Fair is Kerrigan's silver to Baiul's gold, Lillehammer '94 (even if her contusion at the hands of Tonya Harding's henchmen, Gillooly, Eckhardt et al, was criminal). Unfair are Barry Bonds, Mark McGwire and the other baseball batters who doped up. Unfair are the hockey players, too many to keep track of, who punch or bash or slam or otherwise attack each other when the referee's back is turned. If caught, they're thrown in the penalty box.

So we can say: Gillooly and Eckhardt had their own penalty box, the Eastern Oregon Correctional Institute. What we're saying when we say this is that rule in sport is like law in the state, in that it structures what is and is not allowed. Sport becomes a model. In a word, all of its players, actions and rules become metaphor.

Wrestling, as Roland Barthes wrote about it, is the apex of this meeting of the actual with invented form. It is a spectacularization, or pure theater parading as sport. And it is a specific type of metaphor, namely allegory. The wrestler occupies a predetermined role — of winner, loser, hero, cheater, et-cetera — and so portrays "an ideal

understanding of things” to the spectator. The fan in the bleachers apprehends that the cheater who hammers his foe with the butt end of a chair, but then cries foul when fairly pinned, is bound by a set of conventions and sites larger than any particular wrestling ring; that he reifies the explicit rules announced by the referee, while occupying “a particular instance of the possible”¹ within the larger field in which he is expected to cheat (and in turn be beaten).

III.

In *The Man Without Content* the Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben reminds us that the split between a spectator and the work of an artist was not conceptualized as such before God was deemed dead, and only occurred when Nietzsche located the ascendance of the artist’s “demiurgic experience of absolute freedom” in Kant’s idea of the beautiful as that “which gives us pleasure without interest;” or, in other words, in Kant’s idea of an aesthetic object which is separate from its spectator, and which is crafted according to its own demands. From this antecedent Agamben sees the beginning of taste, its attendant experts, and their inexorable drive in an absolute culture (independent of God) toward an ever more medium-specific (or disinterested) art. This art is an ironic, self-negating art, typified in the last century by the ready-made (think of Marcel Duchamp’s bicycle wheel, which makes an art object out of an industrial one), and the pop-art object (think of Andy Warhol’s silkscreens, which make an art object into an industrial one). Previous to this was an art that did not have a spectator because it had neither “an autonomous sphere nor a particular identity,” but instead, as it was collected alongside shells and dinosaur bones, served as a compendium of the human world. It was “the essential measure of man’s dwelling on earth.” I can only take this to mean that it measured the immeasurable as such; that it represented the ineffable.

IV.

The title of David Foster Wallace’s *Federer as Religious Experience* is all you need to read to know that his penchant for parentheticals, footnotes, self-reflexive feints and other po-mo techniques merely circle around the center of something immeasurable and ineffable that can only be accounted for as miraculous. Being disposed to a psychoanalytic understanding of things, I see the center as empty and call it a lack, all the more identifiable for its concurrence with Wallace’s anxious identification with and desire for the phallic mastery embodied by Federer, who is “beautiful,” “made of light,” and “exempt... from physical laws.” Wallace writes that the “kinetic beauty” of watching someone like Federer (and I would add, the problem of being actually, physically related to someone) is based on “human beings’ reconciliation with having a body,” (and I would add, a body that is not also that of another).

The psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan writes of the *objet petit-a* as the “object-cause of desire,” around which desire circles but can never approach.² Still, time and again, we see the investment of part-objects as surrogates for the *objet-a*, in attempt after attempt to fill the gaping hole of its lack: Wallace plugs his eyes, site of the scopic drive, with the deific vision of Federer; Matthew Barney caulks his ass with Vaseline, making his body less porous and more dick-like; Mike Tyson goes nuts like Van Gogh and mutes his mouth by stuffing it with Holyfield’s bitten, bloody ear; and a mother somewhere binds the baby and drowns it in the bathwater, a sacrifice of the ultimate part-object due to the mother’s psychotic inability to re-assimilate the child into her narcissistic illusion of completeness.

Among these disparate behaviors, from hero worship to filicide, is also the work of artists, who are in the business of producing part

objects.³ Exactly because art is malleable and fit for a range of symbolic functions, it is ripe for fulfilling the function of a religion that no longer codifies the mystery of having a body. It is no surprise that an overdetermined art of this kind, not only dependent on identification but trafficking in the body as its primary object, would find sport as a subject, theme, or form, its athletes as icons, and its arenas as the link between the cathedral and the museum.⁴

V.

Drowning Phelps and relishing his victory are proximate in that they are both fantasies. As existing within the realm of the psychic, they are in service of unconscious desires that are otherwise unfulfilled. The difference is nil.

The divers from Riefenstahl’s *Olympia*, reversed in their descent, flung upwards and backwards and back in time, are subject to the apparatus of film and the will of its director, bent on aligning the Aryan with a Classical ideal. Such technocratic mastery is fascist, and the beauty Riefenstahl purports to portray stands but a few steps from the horror of the camps. The proximity is frightening.

The recognition of the range of controls the state exercises over the body is exactly the necessary acknowledgement of the commonality of the totalitarian and the democratic: both are structured upon a sovereign control of the body, the authority to define specific persons or bodies as outside the right to life.⁵

Athletic events are not typically marked with the type of theatrical distancing that might turn someone in the stands on to the idea that the one field (sport) is like another field (the state).⁶ However, whether or not it announces its predisposition, an athletic event, its representation, as all representations (that is, all artworks), conveys a proposition to the spectator as to how it is to be seen and understood; as to how the spectator is structured in viewing. This structuring is an enactment of a politics.

VI.

These days the only sport I watch is the sport I play as I play it. It’s non-competitive, popular in Brazil, and introduced to me by another artist. We stand on the beach about ten feet apart hitting a ball back and forth, attempting to keep it in the air. The ball can be hard or soft, the arc direct or lobbed, the pace brisk or leisurely, the conversation topical or rambling, the weather cloudy or clear. Regardless, we sustain it: we aim not at but for each other; we mirror; we watch. It’s not art. It’s relational.

Jesse Aron Green lives in Los Angeles and is currently in residence at the CCA Kitakyushu, Japan. His recent exhibitions include a solo project in the Oil Tanks at Tate Modern. He received his MFA from U.C.L.A. and his B.A. from Harvard.

1. As Andrea Fraser often says, following the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, who was in turn invoking the philosopher Gaston Bachelard.

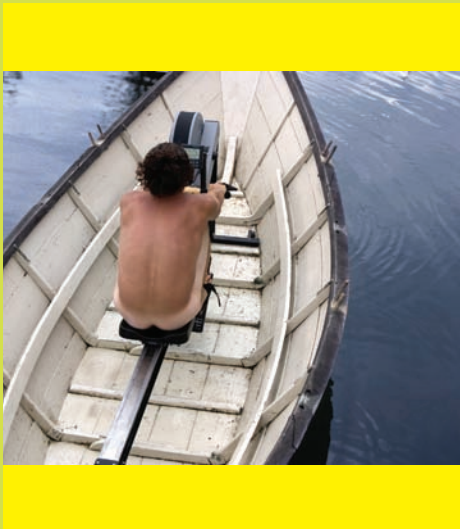
2. To clarify: the *objet-a* is not the thing we desire, but that which causes our desire. The lack that desire attempts to fulfill can never be filled, and so this is why we think of desire as circling around the *objet-a*, and why Lacan’s various schemata (which describe his psychoanalytic concepts in mathematical terms) usually feature the figure of the *objet-a* as within a circle.

3. The production of objects inheres a drive. Once removed from the ken of the artist the object continues to be invested with symbolic value: a collector may buy a sculpture to unconsciously reify the dimensionality of his body, or to support the career of an artist with whom he identifies, or to have the object itself be that which buys him entry into the field of legitimate culture (and its attendant sexual and social relations) which may have consecrated the object as valuable in the first place.

4. Matthew Barney might be the primary example — his work is often described in terms of a pseudo-religious cosmology dependent upon an iconography borrowed from athletics (among other fields) — however there seems to be an increasing number of works in a related vein, such as Philippe Parreno and Douglas Gordon’s *Zidane*.

5. Agamben deals with bio-power in many texts, primarily *Homo-sacer*.

6. I’m referring to Bertolt Brecht. Another reference that brings together theater and religion is Augusto Boal’s *Theater of the Oppressed* and its link to Liberation Theology.



Stroke, 2005-6, Rotoscoped Digital Video, TRT: 9:43

TAD BECK

Tad Beck embraces contradiction. He is first an artist, but also a jock. One side of his brain creates photographic works and video installations included in the collections of the Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, the Princeton University Art Museum, and the Fisher Landau Center for Art, New York. The other side of his brain is consumed with sailing Friendship Sloops, road cycling, snowboarding, and hiking with his dog Little Bear. His primary inspirations are Thomas Eakins and Jackass.



Untitled, (Bathroom), 2007, Archival ink on paper, 30x40"

MARA BODIS-WOLLNER

Mara Bodis-Wollner received her M.F.A. from Bard College 2004 and her B.F.A from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts in Photography. She is represented by Jen Bekman Gallery. In 1999 Mara received a Fulbright Scholarship to Hungary. She has had various solo and group exhibitions. Her solo show at Jen Bekman Gallery in the fall of 2005 was reviewed in *The New Yorker*, *The Voice* and *The Morning News*. In 2007 she attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. She is faculty at Tisch School of the Arts' Department of Photography and Imaging, NYU and the International Center of Photography. She lives in Brooklyn, NY.



Icon Shaun Palmer and his quiver. Meeks Bay, Tahoe, 1998, Lightjet print from original transparency, 20x30"

CHRIS CARNEL

Chris Carnel has been a lifelong enthusiast of the once-termed "Alternative" action-sports of snowboarding and skateboarding. Growing up in Reno, he became serious about photography in 1987 and earned his first assignment in 1989 with a magazine called ISM (International Snowboard Magazine). In the early 1990's Carnel became a senior photographer for *Snowboarder Magazine* and contributed regularly to magazines like *Thrasher*, (a then new) *Trans-World Snowboarding* and *Bikini/Ray-Gun*. In 1993 the upstart magazine *Heckler* was born as a free tabloid-sized zine. Carnel became a partner in *DIY Heckler* as it quickly grew and became a world wide distributed magazine, backed by *Trans-World Media*. Throughout the late 90's he traveled the Northern Hemisphere in search of snow and cement transitions on which to photograph riders for the magazine. Until 2003, he also wrote many of *Heckler's* feature stories. In 2001, with two partners he published a book: "A Declaration of Independents." Today Chris continues to shoot his passions in snowboarding and skateboarding among other personal endeavors. When not working on assignments and projects, he takes trips into the vast Nevada desert for solace, calling Reno base-camp.

ROB CARTER

Rob Carter creates re-constructed imagery of architecture and landscape by using photography and video animation. At heart a passionate football, rugby and cricket fan, sports themes are common in his work, focusing on the historical, theatrical and political nature of the Stadium. Rob Carter received his B.F.A. from the Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art (Oxford, 1998). In August 2000 he relocated to New York City to attend Hunter College, receiving his M.F.A. in 2003. Since then he has exhibited in numerous locations in Europe and the U.S.A. Most recently, in 2008 he opened two solo exhibitions in Madrid, Spain at Galería Fruela and the Pastificio Cerere in Rome, Italy. In the same year he attended the Art Omi Residency, and was awarded a Marie Walsh Sharpe studio space for 2008-09. He currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.



Home of the 1st Earl of Leicester City, 2006, c-print, 29.75x39.5"

BEN COONLEY

Ben Coonley is a video and new media artist who uses documentary, narrative, and pedagogical modes of address to explore aspects of media culture and film history. Coonley studied Art Semiotics at Brown University, and received an MFA from Bard College. His films, installations and live performances have been presented extensively at international film festivals, museums, and underground performance venues. He has taught video and media production at Princeton University, The New School Media Studies Masters Program, and Parsons the New School for Design.

Family Dynasty Digest is a collection of portraits of Patriots fans watching their teams' recent Superbowl appearances. Recorded as time-lapse video and displayed in digital picture frames, the images show the artist and his "honorary family," the Marotta-Campos, as they witness the 2002, 2004 and 2005 Patriot Superbowl victories, as well as the team's shocking 2008 Superbowl loss to the underdog New York Giants.



Family Dynasty Digest, 2008, video, video frames, table

CHARLES FAIRBANKS

Charles Fairbanks grew up in Lexington, Nebraska, before going to Stanford on a wrestling scholarship. His first major photography project focused on Mexico's theatrical wrestling, La Lucha Libre. After earning his B.A., Fairbanks returned to Mexico City and Chiapas to continue photographing, to teach photography, and to wrestle. Subsequently, no longer wrestling, the artist felt increasingly alienated from his father, a former wrestler. Also, he had recurring dreams in which he sought opponents to wrestle but was always thwarted, usually because of inappropriate attire. Since asking his father to participate in the video displayed in Sheppard Gallery's I Like Winners exhibition, their relationship has improved and the dream stopped recurring. Fairbanks now lives in Brussels, Belgium, where he is editing a film about contemporary agriculture, ethanol, and new-age spirituality. He returns to Mexico in 2009 to resume his career as El Gato Tuerto (the One-Eyed Cat) with a video camera in his mask.



Wrestling with my Father, 2008, video



El Pájaro, 2005, video, 2:00 minutes

JIM FINN

“Jim Finn has made a name for himself...thanks to his feeling for irony and his capacity to shape something new from propaganda, news and other historic images. Not to forget his very dry sense of humour” — Rotterdam International Film Festival

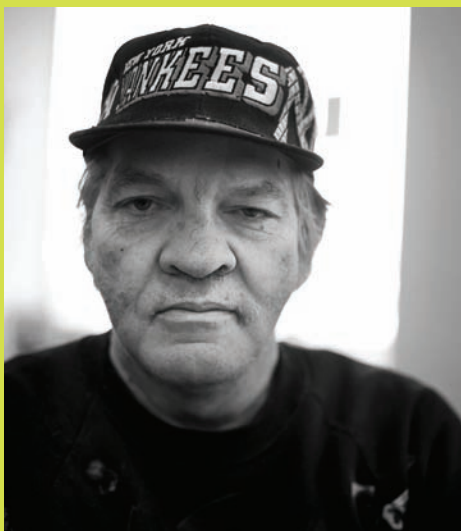
Jim Finn (b. St. Louis, 1968) is a critically acclaimed filmmaker who uses humor and historical fiction to examine communist ideology, capitalism and revolutionary art practices. His work has screened at festivals, museums, and cinemathèques such as Rotterdam International, New York Underground, Edinburgh International, Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid, and the Harvard Film Archive. His latest work is a trilogy of feature-length films looking at Marxist ideology. The first of these, *Interkosmos*, was called “a retro gust of communist utopianism” by the *Village Voice* and “charming and fantastic, so full of rare atmospheres” by Canadian filmmaker Guy Maddin. His second feature *La Trincheria Luminosa del Presidente Gonzalo* was put on the *Village Voice*’s Top 10 Year in Experimental Film. And *Variety* called *The Juche Idea*, his latest film about a North Korean art residency, “brilliant”.



Canteen, 2007, canteen, soccer ball, 14x12"

ARTHUR GIBBONS

Arthur Gibbons received a B.A. from Ohio Wesleyan University and B.F.A./M.F.A. from the University of Pennsylvania. Solo exhibitions include Robert Freidus Gallery and André Emmerich Gallery, New York. Reviewed in *New York Times*, *Village Voice*, *ARTnews Magazine*, *Arts Magazine*, and *International Sculpture*. Other exhibitions include New York State at Guild Hall, East Hampton; Storm King Art Center, Mountainville; Neuberger Museum of Art, SUNY Purchase; Oakland Museum of California; Albuquerque Museum; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond; Hara Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo; Israel Museum, Jerusalem. Gibbons’ work is included in numerous permanent collections. Awards include Reynolds Metals Company Commission and Edward Albee Foundation Fellowship. He has been a S. William Senfeld Artist in Residence, and is currently Professor of Studio Arts, Co-director of Studio Arts Program and Director Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts at Bard College. Growing up in Ohio, Gibbons was a winner in football and camping, but now he loves to see his daughter put one in the net.



George Adams, 2006, black and white print, 20x20"

YOUNG JANG

Young Jang is originally from Anyang, South Korea; he moved to the United States in 2001 to pursue his interest in photography. Young received a B.F.A. in photojournalism from Rochester Institute of Technology. Young has worked for the Maine Photographic Workshops and freelanced for various local magazines. Young has received a number of awards including, 3rd Place for the Wildwood Center Photo Contest in Harrisburg, PA and 2nd Place for the 5th International Photo Competition by Korea Times in New York, NY. In the fall of 2005, Young participated in a group exhibition entitled *One/11*, an exhibition focusing on assorted aspects of nature. Young currently resides in Tinton Falls, NJ; he enjoys playing sports, particularly soccer, and has been focusing on completing several private photo projects.

JAMES JAXXA

James Jaxxa lives and works in New York City. His work in diverse media combines everyday materials with those that are glamorous, glittery and sensuous. The resulting artwork melds artifice with reality and explores issues of male identity, vulnerability and the sublime. Disenfranchised from team sports growing up, Jaxxa took a quintessential American object, an NFL football, and parodied traditional notions of masculinity. Jaxxa's work has been exhibited at several locations in New York City including Longwood Art Project, apexart, Exit Art and Rush Arts Gallery. Jaxxa previously lived in Seattle, where his work was shown at numerous sites including the Bellevue Art Museum, Vital 5, and venues with the Seattle Art Museum. He is a recipient of an Artists Space Independent Project Grant and Seattle Arts Commission Purchase Award. Jaxxa attended the School of Visual Arts and Rhode Island School of Design, and received his B.S. and M.S. from Michigan State University.



Pink Football, 2004, Sequins, glass beads and straight pins on regulation size NFL football

DAVID KING

David King's collages are constructed in the traditional cut and paste method and explore his response to the body, sexuality and spirituality. The vision in his most recent body of work, entitled "Benevolent Beings," was to create pieces, which, despite all the troubles in the world, mirror the peacefulness and benevolent energy that is also part of his experience. King's work has been shown in Europe and across the U.S., including venues such as Artist's Space in New York, The Soap Factory in Minneapolis, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, and The Lab in San Francisco. He is currently the artist-in-residence at the San Francisco Dump. More of his collages and information can be found at www.davidkingcollage.com. He lives in San Francisco.



Equine Dreaming, 2008, collage, 9x11"

WILLIAM LAMSON

William Lamson is a Brooklyn based artist who works in video, photography, performance and sculpture. His work addresses issues of masculinity, amateurism, science, play and the quixotic quest for personal heroism that accompanies these subjects. He received his M.F.A. from Bard in 2006 and B.A. from Dartmouth in 2000. His work has been shown at P.S.1, The Brooklyn Museum, Pierogi Gallery and the Museum of Fine Arts in Santa Fe, amongst others.



Duel, 2008, Min HD Video, 1:08 minutes



213, 1973, silver gelatin print, Courtesy of the artist and Feature Gallery

JUDY LINN

Judy Linn has been taking photographs since 1969. Growing up watching old Sonia Henie movies on TV and being sent off for weekly pilgrimages to the local movie theater has formed her interest in sports. Jerry Lewis and Dean Martin were good but Esther Williams was a goddess. If by chance or by Netflix you surrender an hour to Esther Williams in *Million Dollar Mermaid* you will understand life anew. Inept at baseball, field hockey, and tennis, Linn has a psychological aversion to small objects propelled at great force in any way in her direction. If she actually manages to not flinch and catch a ball, she has an embarrassingly ridiculous throw. On the bright side during her thirties she became enamored with gymnastics and perfected a fine handstand. Now she just walks around and feels self satisfied in her ability to do so.



Minicam III, 2008, Performance at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

JENNIFER LOCKE

Jennifer Locke is a San Francisco-based artist, obsessed with power structures in relation to the body, voyeurism, and technological mediation. Her extreme interest in dynamics of dominance led her to a career as a professional dominatrix and champion Gracie Jiu-Jitsu submission wrestler. Her gold medal tournament wins include the Pan-American Championships, the Copa Pacifica, and US Open. Working in performance, video, and digital photography, Locke often turns the camera on herself in the act of filming and photographing subjects such as men from her fight team.

Locke has exhibited in venues such as the 48th Venice Biennale; Air de Paris, Paris; the 9th Havana Biennial; the Basel Art Fair, Kunsthalle, Basel; La Panaderia, Mexico City; Palais de Beaux-Arts, Brussels; Hallwalls, New York; and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco. She received her M.F.A. from the San Francisco Art Institute and was awarded the 2006 Chauncey McKeever Award.



Love conquers all night, 2004, color photograph, 20x24"

LUCAS MICHAEL

Lucas Michael was born in Argentina. His work – informed by popular culture at large, while influenced by a wide range of artistic styles and practices – has been shown and screened at galleries, museums, and international festivals. These include the Getty Center in Los Angeles; Art gallery of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada; GenderBender Festival in Bologna, Italy; Boston Center for the Arts, MA; Salon 94 at Frieze Art Fair, London; S.M.A.K. Museum, Gent, Belgium; Apexart, NY; Museo de Arte Contemporáneo in Bahía Blanca, Argentina; White Columns, NY. His performance piece “No, u didn’t” was commissioned by and performed at The Hammer Museum in Los Angeles as part of the Off Screen series. Lucas Michael’s relationship to sports is one of performative frustration, familial disappointment, and artistic reventfulness. Lucas currently lives and works in Los Angeles, where he is also the co-founder and director of ACP, Artist Curated Projects.

JEFFREY JAMES MOHR

Mohr was born in Spokane, Washington. After spending several years in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California studying New Genres, fly fishing, motorcycling, and freestyle skiing Mohr moved to Los Angeles. He received a Master of Fine Arts in Sculpture/Intermedia from California State University, Long Beach. Mohr's work takes shape in forms including: video, sculpture, installation, performance, and sound. He is an active member of Vern, an international art collective. His work has resulted in solo and group exhibitions in galleries and museums in Belgium, California, England, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Nevada, New York, and Washington including a sound performance commemorating the opening of the Broad Contemporary Art Museum. Mohr is former director of exhibitions at the Treehouse Gallery and co-founder of AMproject in Los Angeles. As a curator, Mohr's curatorial work has resulted in nearly 30 exhibitions locally and internationally with a recent feature in Readymade Magazine. Both his visual and written works have been published by AMproject Publishing.



Zone D 3-5, 2005, Installation view, Deer Antlers, Steel, Video projection

CAITLIN PARKER

Caitlin Parker recently received her M.F.A. in painting from the Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts (Bard College). She earned her B.A. from the Slade School of Fine Art in London, graduating with first class honors. Her work has been seen in galleries and museums in London, Germany, and New York. In 2007 she was awarded a Jerome Foundation Grant to travel to the exclusion zone in Chernobyl, Ukraine. Originally from Northern California she lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She's not really a professional boxer.



I Wish I Was Roy Jones Jr., 2001, Black and White DV, 2:53 minutes

PROJECT MOONSHINE

Project Moonshine, as directed by Founder Michael Albright, is a non-profit organization in Reno, Nevada designed to teach filmmaking skills to teenagers by providing opportunities to document important events happening in their community. Since the inception in 2006, Project Moonshine has completed five feature-length documentaries and three short films, all of which were shot entirely by local High School students. Through private donations and grants from the Nevada Arts Council, they raised enough funding money to purchase the necessary production equipment and to screen their films around the world. So far they have shown in fifteen countries in five continents and have been reviewed in *Variety*, *Austin Chronicle*, and *Reno News and Review*. The Moonshiners collaborate regularly with various non-profits and educational organizations such as Artown, Nevada Museum of Art, Reno Film Festival, Holland Project, Urban Market, and Sheppard Gallery, University of Nevada, Reno.



Swimmer Jim from commissioned video documentary, 2008, 50 min.



1v1 (team detail), 2006, installation/performance, found objects, sound, performance, game

MATTHEW SLAATS

Presently living in upstate New York, Matthew Slaats completed his M.F.A. and M.A. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2005 and his B.A. in Archaeology from the University of Evansville in 1999. His artistic career has a vast array of interests focusing around competition, performance, installation, video, and sound. Work has been seen at The Kitchen and in collaboration with the Flux Factory, both in New York City. Shows include locations such as Beacon, Ithaca, Poughkeepsie, Richmond, and Chicago. In 2006 he traveled to Singapore, working with Artistic Director Ong Keng Sen on the production of 'Diaspora' for the Singapore Arts Festival. Other artists he has worked with include Meredith Monk, Matthew Buckingham and Richard Gough.

Having grown up in Green Bay, Wisconsin (the home of the Green Bay Packers) and played collegiate soccer at the Division 1 level, athletics has played an ever-present role in the artist's life. He translates these experiences through the exploration of sport as a space for interaction. By creating situations that are activated through performance, he investigates the relationships that sport has with culture, player/audience, and his own identity.



Book of Mormon stories 1, 2007, embroidery on canvas, 8x12"

ADAM TAYE

Growing up Mormon, it was instilled that the second best thing to aspire to (if not called to be a Prophet of God), was a career in the NBA. Last year Adam Taye was in three fantasy basketball leagues. Taye is creating a visual language of appropriation that explores the artifacts of self-determination, free agency, and self-fulfilling prophesy as it relates to his own experience. In 1974 Taye was born in Los Angeles, CA and grew up in Boise, Idaho. He received a B.A. from Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA in 2001, and currently lives in Brooklyn, NY.



Lavender Mist [Equivalent], 2008, pigment print, 33x24"

JONATHAN VANDYKE

Jonathan VanDyke (Brooklyn, NY) received an M.F.A. in sculpture from Bard College in 2004, attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in 2008, and was a resident at the Atlantic Center for the Arts in Florida in 2007, where he studied under artist Paul Pfeiffer. He has mounted recent solo exhibitions at Pocket Utopia in Brooklyn, at the Hartnett Gallery of the University of Rochester, and in the Great Hall Gallery at the University of Chicago, where he served as a visiting artist fellow in 2006. In 2005 he received an emerging artist fellowship to mount a large-scale outdoor work at Socrates Sculpture Park in Queens, NY, and also built a large-scale installation at the Islip Art Museum in New York. In 2007 he built installations as part of group shows at Florida State University and PS122 Gallery in New York. In his recent work, he considers the activity of the body and expressions of sexuality found in both abstract painting and in sport.

MARIE WATT

Marie Watt, of Portland, Oregon, draws from Indigenous design principles, oral tradition, personal experience, and Western art history. Her approach to art-making is shaped by the proto-feminism of Iroquois matrilineal custom, political work by Native artists in the 60s, a discourse on multiculturalism, as well as Abstract Expressionism and Pop Art. Recent awards, residencies and fellowships include Anonymous Was a Woman, Fabric Workshop & Museum, Joan Mitchell Foundation, Eiteljorg Museum's Contemporary Native American Artist Fellowship, Seattle Art Museum Betty Bowen Award, Skowhegan School and Vermont Studio Center. Watt is represented by PDX Contemporary Art and Greg Kucera Gallery. Exhibits include Marylhurst Art Gym, Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, Ronna and Eric Hoffman Gallery of Contemporary Art at Lewis and Clark College, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian's George Gustave Heye Center in New York, and Institute of American Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Watt holds an M.F.A. in Painting and Printmaking from the Yale School of Art, a B.S. in Communications and Art/Art History from Willamette University and an A.A. in Museum Studies from the Institute of American Indian Arts.



Jim Thorpe and Relations, 2008, mixed-media, courtesy of the artist and Greg Kucera Gallery

CARLIN WING

At the age of nine, Carlin Wing was secretly transformed into a squash player by a squash coach masquerading as a tennis coach in Brooklyn, New York. When on a brief hiatus from squash due to right wrist surgery at the age of sixteen, she stumbled across photography. A decade later, she is attempting to resolve the competition for her attention between the two disciplines by encouraging them to recognize their shared histories. Both photography and squash emerged out of the Industrial Revolution and were employed as cultural tools of colonization. With an eye to this tangled history, Wing takes on the portable global local simultaneous sponsored structures of the present day.

Carlin Wing competed on the Women's International Squash Professional Tour through 2007 and was a member of the US National Squad. She has a B.A. from Harvard in 2002 and a M.F.A. from CalArts in 2008. She is currently an artist based out of Nashville, TN where she is a Visiting Lecturer in the Art Department at Vanderbilt University.



Ramy Ashour (EGY) vs Omar Elborolossy (EGY), Bear Stearns Tournament of Champions, Grand Central Station, January 12, 2008, C-print, 40x50"

LISA YOUNG

Lisa Young's work explores the relationship between the temporal and the sublime through installation, books, video, and web projects. The athlete as subject/metaphor is a recurring theme. In *Lyra Angelica*, a figure skater's multiple performances explore cultural definitions of beauty, perfection, success and failure.

Young's exhibition venues include the Cue Art Foundation and White Columns, New York, NY; Wave Hill, Bronx, NY; and Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY. Her work is included in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art New, York, NY; the Cornell University Archive of New Media Art, Ithaca, NY; and the Neues Museum Weserberg, Germany. She holds a B.F.A. from the University of Illinois, an M.F.A. from Tufts University/School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and is an alumnus of the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program. Currently a Visiting Critic at the Rhode Island School of Design, Young lives and works Providence, Rhode Island.



perfect/imperfect, 2002, 40-page double-sided flipbook, 2 3/8x4 5/8"

Curatorial Statement

I Like Winners: Sport and Selfhood

By Marjorie Vecchio, PhD, Director and Curator,
Sheppard Fine Arts Gallery

Football season! Yay hoo!!!!

Yay hoo? My only so-so-ok memory of football season was the low din of the game in the background during autumn weekends when I was a kid. Now as an adult, the goofy face paint on chubby torso-naked boy-men and ridiculously over-paid coaches makes me repulsed with confusion - - and admittedly a little misunderstanding as well. This past year I challenged myself to curate a show that I would never do. 'Sports' instantly came to mind. Sports and art, as well as artists and athletes, seemed antithetical, thus a captivating disparity to investigate through an exhibition. Research revealed that there were not many exhibitions dedicated to sports - - except for a few thematically related to men and masculinity. That interesting yet narrow foray into gender identity that continually favors masculinity (even when the subject is actually femininity) didn't absorb me: sport is a labyrinthine subject, thus "I Like Winners: Sport and Selfhood" evolved as the theme. Upon submitting a call-for-work to numerous artists, email groups and programs, the response was overwhelming; we were on to something! The amount of applications typified a survey show, which meant creating some boundaries in order to better organize the show. The rules were to exhibit: 1) widespread representation of artwork styles, media and content, 2) no famous artists already known as 'sports' artists, 3) American artists or living in America, and 4) most importantly, to exhibit pieces by artists who both do and do not deploy sports as a primary course of research.

There is a team of twenty-five excellent artists in this exhibition, including one who wrote the catalogue essay. Some focus on sports, games or athletics on a regular basis, many do not. As I waited for submissions to roll in, I thought more about my original anti-sport stance. It seemed that I was ignorantly aligning personal impressions about non-athletic spectators alongside the hard work of athletes, and not conceptualizing the layers in between. Thinking about my own selfhood, a flood of memories stormed in: wait a minute, - - I love sports! As a little kid, I was enrolled in gymnastics, ballet and swimming. Throughout middle and high school I played tennis, volleyball, softball and basketball, even participating in cheerleading as a joke with two friends the last semester of high school because the instructor was our favorite art teacher. (The joke was not very funny because we stunk.) In college I ran cross-country, was on the squash team, and practiced yoga

and weight lifting. I moved to Reno in part to take advantage of the easily accessible outdoors for hiking, swimming, and biking. I realized that connecting to one's self through sports was and continues to be instrumental in my development as a generally happy, confident and healthy individual; that physical effort and organized, rule-oriented games affected all parts of my life. And I bet that artists had similar experiences, one way or another, even if they hated sports.

Defining what is sport, hobby, recreational activity or entertainment is difficult. Professor Jan Boxill, an eminent philosopher of sports and ethics at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, considers the definition to not include calisthenics, weightlifting, and jogging because they are exercise not sport. However, the definition for this exhibition is expansive. "I Like Winners" represents the gamut from hunting to yoga to snowboarding, while including traditionally defined sports such as wrestling, football, tennis, boxing, figure skating, basketball, soccer, squash, and rowing. Made-up games are also included. The works also represent a broad relationship to winning and selfhood. Many pieces fall into categories of idealized selfhood, either seriously or tongue in cheek. Some of the artworks are about the spectator both in the stands and out, as well as the architectural space designed for sports to be played and watched. We shouldn't be surprised that team sports were a popular subject matter with many artists, but not quite as much as individual sports, where only two people play each other, such as wrestling, boxing, singles tennis, rowing and figure skating. I noticed that many artists had one or two pieces about sports deep somewhere in their portfolios while they generally made artwork about other themes. This is important to point out, as it supports the idea that sport and selfhood are related, even when not concentrated on. Somewhere from being a kid to an adult, these artists cared enough about a personal relationship to sports to make an artwork or two about it. On the other hand, some of the artists have a background in serious athletic achievement and make artwork related to it: including award-winners in squash, figure skating, soccer and wrestling. And yet other group of artists consider themselves award-winning fans, dedicated for years to their favorite team and players, supporting them to victory year after year or standing by them in loss.

It's been exhilarating to create an exhibition of this size about sports. We included one to six pieces by each artist in order to both represent the theme and get a sense of the artist's work. It is inspiring to witness and contemplate the intelligent and humorous twists in the artwork. Let them serve as reminder to re-discover the joy and skillfulness in competition with oneself and peers, to fight the good fight, and get dirty as often as possible. Yay hoo!



This fabulous catalogue was designed by Ellen Drewes, a winner of Sheppard Gallery's Emerging Designer Competition.

The curator would like to thank all the artists for their patience and general awesomeness in putting together this gigantic show; Bailey Sharrocks, Devin Hosselkus, Wendy Ricco, Ellen Drewes, Director Cary Groth and Asst. to the Director Andrea Pearson from University of Nevada, Reno Department of Athletics, UNR Visiting Artist MFA Assistant Peter Whittenberger for Mathew Slaats, Christine Karkow, Diane Bacey and the printing staff at A. Carlisle & Co., UNR student installation assistants and interns: Alana Berglund, Amy Winberg, Ashley Westwood, Audrey Love, Lauren Randolph, NJ Petersen, Chris Zangara, Gina Peraldo, Jackson Mueller, Nikki Davis; Ben Tedore and Joe DeLappe for tech equipment loans, Emily Henderson (Asst. to Marie Watt), Jeff Erickson and the Art Department.

And the folks who recommended artists for this exhibition: Anna Sew Hoy, Nick Tobier, Eunkang Koh, Keiko Narahashi, Dan Poston, Rachel Hawthorn, Holly Linton, Allyson Vieira, Jackie Brookner, Paul Stout, Carlos Motta, Scott Wayne Indiana, Ahren Hertel, Nina Bovasso and Suzanne Joelson.

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