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SPORTS AND MASCULINITY EXPLORED IN ART

GROUP EXHIBITION *HARD TARGETS* OFFERS PROVOCATIVE LOOK AT SPECTACLE, RITUALS, AND ARCHETYPES

Columbus, OH—The multimedia exhibition *Hard Targets*, on view **January 30–April 11, 2010** at the Wexner Center, surveys provocative artworks produced over the last 25 years that take masculinity and sports as their central themes. Ranging broadly in interest and focus from biology to commodity and locker room to stadium, *Hard Targets* endeavors to complicate and revise the time-honored archetype of the male athlete as an aggressive, heterosexual, hyper-competitive, emotionally remote subject. Instead, the artists in the show offer



Catherine Opie
Football Landscape #5 (Juneau vs. Douglas, Juneau, Alaska), 2007
Chromogenic print
48 x 64 in.
Courtesy of the artist and Regen Projects, Los Angeles

opposing views of masculinity and sport, and of the entire theater of athletic play, including the rituals and accoutrements that surround this intimate, and often still male-dominated, world. The **more than 70 works**—in a wide variety of media, including video, photography, mixed-media sculpture, painting, and installation—range from funny and irreverent to self-effacing and incisive.

The 21 artists in the show are Doug Aitken, Matthew Barney, Mark Bradford, Harun Farocki, Andreas Gursky, Douglas Gordon, David Hammons, Brian Jungen, Byron Kim, Jeff Koons, Cary Leibowitz, Glenn Ligon, Kori Newkirk, Catherine Opie (including a new suite of photographs of high school

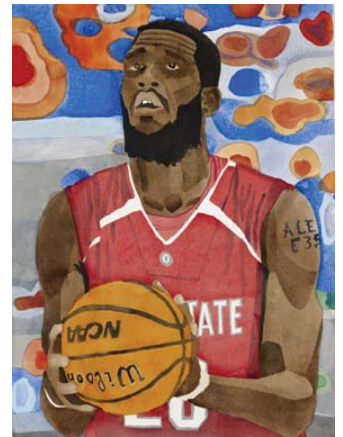
football players produced in Columbus), Philippe Parreno, Paul Pfeiffer (whose 11 exhibited pieces offer a mini-survey of this artist's work), Collier Schorr, Sam Taylor-Wood, Hank Willis Thomas, and Jonas Wood. In addition, a video work by Joe Sola video will be presented in The Box video space during the first month of the show.

Each artist examines the way masculinity is characterized and “performed” in a sporting context, and each suggests that the ways we view and consume sports stars and athletic events are structured by more complex systems of desire and identification than most spectators realize. The works in the exhibition open up alternative, and possibly more democratic, interpretations and inflections of sports and sports fandom than the authorized, often frankly commercial, images that most frequently and forcefully convey the cultural identity of male athletes and athleticism.

Curator Christopher Bedford notes, “This exhibition strives to trigger new discussions in and between the fields of contemporary art and the vast multimedia spectacle of male-dominated sports. My hope is that it offers a critical evaluation of the separation that still persists between sport as a cultural phenomenon and art as a field of inquiry—and evidence of the insight to be gained from moments of messy intersection.”

This exhibition will be accompanied by an **extended gallery guide** with essays by Christopher Bedford, Matthew Biro (professor of modern and contemporary art at the University of Michigan), and Jennifer Doyle (professor of English at University of California-Irvine), plus interviews with select artists.

For a selection of images, visit www.wexarts.org/info/press/hardtargets.



Jonas Wood
Greg Oden, 2008
Gouache and colored pencil on paper
30 x 22 in.
Courtesy of the artist, Anton Kern Gallery, New York and Shane Campbell Gallery, Chicago



Douglas Gordon & Philippe Parreno
Zidane: A 21st Century Portrait, 2006
Two video projections
Film still courtesy Studio Douglas Gordon

The Wexner Center and **Ohio State Athletics** will partner to produce celebrity public service announcements and events around the exhibition. **Ohio State sports fans holding ticket stubs to any sporting event during the run of the exhibition will also receive buy-one-get-one admission.** Additional collaborations are planned with the Arnold Classic, Columbus Blue Jackets, Greater Columbus Sports Commission, Ohio State Recreational Sports, and Ohio High School Athletics Association.

VISITOR INFORMATION: *Hard Targets* is on view to the public January 30–April 11, 2010 at the Wexner Center for the Arts, 1871 N. High St. (at 15th Ave.) on the campus of The Ohio State University in Columbus. Gallery hours are Tuesday–Wednesday and Sunday 11 am–6 pm; Thursday–Saturday 11 am–8 pm; closed Mondays. Walk-In Tours will be held Thursdays at 5 pm and Saturdays at 1 pm beginning February 4. Admission to the galleries is \$5; free for Wexner Center members, college students, and visitors 18 and under; free Thursdays from 4 to 8 pm and the first Sunday of the month. More info: wexarts.org or 614 292-3535.

RELATED EVENTS

Super Sunday

Sunday, February 7 | 1-5 pm | Galleries open 11 am-6 pm (FREE)

Gallery admission is free the first Sunday of every month—and one of those Sundays ("Super Sunday") includes related activities for the whole family.

Visitors can sample a range of special activities related to *Hard Targets*, including a tour, pennant-making, "drawing" with sports equipment, face painting, and more. A free screening of ***Go Tigers!***, a documentary about high school football in Massillon, Ohio (called one of the best documentaries of all time by ESPN) will be held at 2 pm, along with trailers from sports movies.

Spectator/Sport: A Panel on Athletics, Art and Masculinity

Tuesday, March 2 | 7 pm | FREE | Film/Video Theater

Artist Kori Newkirk (featured in *Hard Targets*) and art historian/soccer blogger Jennifer Doyle talk with exhibition curator Christopher Bedford about their ideas and experiences through the lens of *Hard Targets*.

FILM SERIES

Players: Sports on Film

A view of football, cycling, and tennis through the cinematic eyes of talents Jørgen Leth and William Klein as they fix their lenses on John McEnroe, George Best, and other all-time greats. Unless otherwise noted, tickets are \$7 for general public; \$5 for members, students, and senior citizens.

Sunday, February 7 | 2 pm | FREE (part of Super Sunday)

***Go Tigers!* (Kenneth A. Carlson, 2001) 103 mins., 35mm**

Go Tigers! chronicles the vigorous passion for high school football in the small rustbelt town of Massillon, Ohio. Adding to the drama of a typical football season is the fact that an upcoming school funding vote is tied to the success of the team.

Wednesday, February 17 | DOUBLE FEATURE:

7 pm—*Sundays in Hell* (Jørgen Leth, 1976; 110 mins., video)

9:15 pm—*Football as Never Before* (Hellmuth Costard, 1971; 105 mins., video)

Legendary cycling action, captured from every angle. With *Sunday in Hell*, Leth (featured in Lars von Trier's *Five Obstructions*) uses 20 cameras to take you inside the grueling 1976 Paris-Roubaix cycling



(Above):

Paul Pfeiffer

Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (28), 2007

Fujiflex digital Chromogenic print

48 x 60 in.

Courtesy of the artist and The Project, New York

(Below):

Joe Sola

Saint Henry Composition, 2001

Single-channel video with sound

5 mins., 7 secs.

Courtesy of Bespoke Gallery, New York; Production

support provided by the Wexner Center for the Arts,

The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio



race as it winds through northern France.

As the Northern Irish would say, "Maradona good, Pelé better, George Best." Often cited as a precursor to the film *Zidane, Football as Never Before* employs eight cameras to follow Best, the Manchester United great and 1968 European Footballer of the year, over the course of an entire match.

Wednesday, February 24 at 7 pm

***The French* (William Klein, 1982) 130 mins., 16mm**

The great photographer/filmmaker William Klein goes behind the scenes at the 1981 French Open, capturing such tennis greats as John McEnroe, Chris Evert, Martina Navratilova, and Arthur Ashe in candid moments both on and off the court.

Wex Lab: MAKE TV

Saturday, January 30 | 11 pm-4 pm | FREE

Families will see how to plan, storyboard, shoot, and edit a complete simple DVD all inside of one day.

Families will choose a favorite sports prop or theme for their one-day video production. **NOTE: Registration for this event is now full.**

TEACHER WORKSHOP

Sports, Culture, and Gender: An Exploration through Writing and Video

Saturday, March 13 | 9 am-4 pm | FREE | Performance Space

Teachers will be invited to explore such questions as how sports reflect a society's culture or its views on gender through writing activities and digital storytelling. All educators are invited, but this workshop is especially suited for language arts, social studies, and media or visual arts teachers. To register: 614-292-6493 or email edweb@wexarts.org.

Walk-in Tours: Thursdays at 5 pm and Saturdays at 1 pm (beginning February 4 through April 10)

Free on Thursdays (part of Free Thursdays from 4 to 8 pm); tour inc. w/gallery admission on Saturdays.

On view at the Cartoon Research Library

Let the Games Begin: A Century of Sports Cartoons

January 15-April 9, 2010

Ohio State's Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum (just steps from the doors of the Wexner Center) offers another look at attitudes toward sports and athletes in this exhibition in its Reading Room Gallery. Find out more about this exhibition, organized in conjunction with *Hard Targets*, at cartoons.osu.edu.

EXHIBITION SUPPORT

All Wexner Center exhibitions and related events receive support from the Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center Foundation and Wexner Center members, as well as Greater Columbus Arts Council, The Columbus Foundation, Nationwide Foundation, and the Ohio Arts Council. Accommodations are provided by The Blackwell Inn.

A note: *Hard Targets* is a revised presentation of *Mixed Signals: Artists Consider Masculinity in Sports*, a traveling exhibition organized and circulated by iCI (Independent Curators International), New York, that was itself an expanded version of *Contemporary Projects 11: Hard Targets—Masculinity and Sports*, an exhibition organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. (Bedford curated all three shows.) The *Mixed Signals* exhibition, tour, and catalogue were made possible, in part, by The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, the iCI Advocates, the iCI Partners, Agnes Gund, Gerrit and Sydie Lansing, and Barbara and John Robinson.