



# FELLOWSHIPS

THE GREATER MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION'S MARY L. NOHL FUND

# FOR

# INDIVIDUAL

# ARTISTS 2007



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INDIVIDUAL

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GARY JOHN GRESL

MARK KLASSEN

DAN OLLMAN

ANNIE KILLELEA

FAYTHE LEVINE

COLIN MATTHES

KEVIN J. MIYAZAKI

OCTOBER 10, 2008-JANUARY 18, 2009

INOVA/KENILWORTH  
2155 NORTH PROSPECT AVENUE  
MILWAUKEE, WI 53202

# EDITOR'S PREFACE

**Greater Milwaukee Foundation is made up of charitable funds, each created by individual donors or families to serve the charitable causes of their choice. Grants from these funds serve people throughout Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee and Washington counties and beyond. Started in 1915, the Foundation is one of the oldest and largest community foundations in the U.S. and abroad.**

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Published by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
Peck School of the Arts  
P.O. Box 413  
Milwaukee, WI 53201  
Phone: (414) 229-4762  
Fax: (414) 229-6154  
arts.uwm.edu

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ISBN: XXXXXXXXXXXXX  
Printed in the United States of America

When the Greater Milwaukee Foundation decided, in 2003, to use a portion of a bequest from artist Mary L. Nohl to underwrite a fellowship program for individual visual artists, it was making a major investment in local artists who traditionally lacked access to support. The program, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Mary L. Nohl Fund Fellowships for Individual Artists, provides unrestricted awards to artists to create new work or complete work in progress and is open to practicing artists residing in Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee or Washington counties.

Nohl, a graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, died in December 2001 at the age of 87. She rarely exhibited her work, yet she gained national recognition for her art, much of which was housed in and around her home in Fox Point on the shores of Lake Michigan. Her bequest to the Greater Milwaukee Foundation, by supporting local visual arts and arts education programs, keeps Nohl's passion for the visual arts alive in our community.

The fellowship program was designed to provide significant support to artists at two critical career stages, to encourage artists to remain in greater Milwaukee where they can continue to enrich our community, and to create—through the jurying process—an opportunity for curators from outside the area to see the work of local artists. Thirty-five artists have received fellowships since 2003, the majority of whom have stayed in greater Milwaukee, contributing to its cultural life. Fifteen curators from around the country have come to Milwaukee to view the work of nearly 200 artists each year, acquiring knowledge of the area's artistic production that would be impossible to gain in other ways. More than 80 artists, several of them Nohl Fellows, have received support from the Suitcase Export Fund, which funds the transportation of artists and their work to exhibitions outside the area. These artists have exhibited in venues throughout the United States, Europe, Latin America, Asia and the former Soviet Union, bringing their work and greater Milwaukee to the world. It is an impressive legacy for Mary L. Nohl, the Foundation, and our community.

In 2007 as in the preceding years, seven fellowships were awarded, and the exhibition this catalogue documents represents the culmination of a year's work by three established artists—Gary John Gresl, Mark Klassen and Dan Ollman—and four emerging artists—Annie Killelea, Faythe Levine, Colin Matthes and Kevin J. Miyazaki. The artists were selected by a panel of jurors who spent two days reviewing work samples and artists' statements, making studio visits and talking to local artists: Ingrid Schaffner, senior curator at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; Hamza Walker, associate curator and director of education for the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago; and Clara Kim, associate curator at REDCAT (Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater), Los Angeles.

The Mary L. Nohl Fund Fellowships are administered in collaboration with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Peck School of the Arts and Visual Arts Milwaukee (VAM!). The program owes much of its success to the volunteers—Milwaukee artists, curators and arts administrators—who established guidelines for the fellowship competition; organized and administered the jurying process; and participated in the production of the catalogue.

**Polly Morris**  
**Peck School of the Arts, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee**

ESTABLISHED ARTISTS



# GARY JOHN GRESL

## THE ALCHEMY OF OBJECTS

Wisconsin born and bred, Gary John Gresl makes work that relates directly to his experiences not just with the land, but with the objects that at some point were part of everyday life in this state and beyond—enjoying their moment of fashion or usefulness before being consigned to history. Gresl's skill and sensitivity as an artist is to reinvent and reconfigure this past into contemporary, personal commentaries with broad relevance. In effect, he performs a kind of alchemy—according to the dictionary, “any magical power or process of transmuting a common substance, usually of little value, into a substance of great value.” This approach was encapsulated in a recent show entitled “Palimpsests and Middens”; the former meaning “writing material used after the erasure of earlier writing,” the latter “a compost-heap, a refuse-bin or its contents.” In essence, Gresl uses the detritus of the past to write new narratives. “Experience adds patina and layers, insights and ideas... and eventually everything turns back to dust. Everything evolves,” he says.

For the Mary L. Nohl Fellowship exhibition, Gresl elaborates on this theme with three new works: *Territory*, *Regrowth* and *Pseudomorph After Flag*. The latter two contain elements that are separated from their companions by vitrines—common features in museums—that denote, among other things: fragility, value, status and how we fundamentally perceive things. Instantly, by putting objects off limit to touch and use, Gresl raises a motley collection of quotidian elements to a new level, imbuing them with significance and, by virtue of being brought together in a new configuration, a new narrative. This story is, of course, personal to Gresl, but the sheer ubiquity and familiarity of the disparate components means others will engage and appreciate, eliciting narratives of their own and perhaps shared past experiences.

Initially a painter, Gresl moved swiftly to sculpture and has built his reputation on such assemblages. Even so, here he includes digital prints of site-specific installations that are purposely ephemeral. In *Document Ephemera*, he reverses his normal modus operandi: instead of recycling objects in new forms, he creates new structures intended to vanish. Either way, Gresl's artistic alchemy seeks to encourage greater awareness of our lives, our possessions and how we use and appreciate them.

**Graeme Reid, Assistant Director  
Museum of Wisconsin Art**



## ARTIST STATEMENT

Having begun creating art objects in a serious way about 1983, in my early forties, it was not long before I recognized that three-dimensional objects had been a focus and inspiration all my life. The place of objects in the world has been the motivation for my work in the antiques trade and for my art making. In assemblage sculpture I combined the drives to collect, to revisit my experiences, to experiment with objects familiar and non-, to articulate ideas relative to our human place on earth, and to organize materials into expressions I had not seen before. In the '80s my painted canvases began to gather 3-D objects to them, and sculptures became my dominant interest. In objects there was a directness, a tangibility; they offered palpable clues to other cultures and times while creating metaphorical surprises. Assemblages are palimpsests and middens, filled with hidden layers and rediscovered castoffs...as are our minds. Life, death, intellect, intuition and instinct...all embedded.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, in 1943, Gary John Gresl received a B.S. from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and an M.S. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He began as a teacher in the Brillion (WI) public schools, and later managed and owned the Milwaukee Antique Center for 31 years. Gresl served four terms as president of Wisconsin Painters & Sculptors, Inc. and was on its state board for over two decades. Working with the Museum of Wisconsin Art and the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, Gresl originated the Wisconsin Visual Art Lifetime Achievement Awards in 2004. He has contributed to *Art in Wisconsin* and other publications; served as a juror and panel member on numerous occasions; participated in over 100 exhibitions; and received several awards.

## CHECKLIST

All sculptures composed of various assembled objects.

<i>Give Us This Day</i> 1990 27 x 50 x 8 inches <small>Collection of Jonah Gresl</small>	<i>Reliquary</i> 2002 75 x 49 x 36 inches	<i>The Kickbush Postulate</i> 2005 27 x 45 x 14 inches <small>Collection of Michael Kutzer &amp; Susan Kutzer-Arenz</small>	<i>Uncle's Vitrine</i> 2007 40 x 55 x 27 inches
<i>The Tisch Mills Opera House</i> 2000 87 x 50 x 18 inches	<i>North of Pembine</i> 2003 75 x 83 x 20 inches	<i>Pseudomorph After Flag</i> 2007 74 x 59 x 26 inches	<i>Metaphor</i> 2008 variable dimensions
<i>Steven's Point Reprise</i> 2001 79 x 70 x 26 inches	<i>Earth Box</i> 2004 48 x 54 x 18 inches	<i>Regrowth</i> 2007 89 x 68 x 38 inches	<i>Territory</i> 2008 99 x 83 x 58 inches
<i>Bill's Trophy Off the South Pier</i> 2001 67 x 41 x 10 inches	<i>The Henkelmann Construct</i> 2004 134 x 98 x 42 inches	<i>Synopsis</i> 2007 72 x 86 x 38 inches	<i>Document Ephemera, Sampler Suite #1</i> , 2008 [box with 12 pigmented ink digital prints, approx. 24 x 31 inches each]



*Modification of Behavior, 2005*

*The Henkelmann Construct, 2004*



*Give Us This Day*, 1990  
From the collection of Jonah Grest



*From Professor Swedenborg's Abandoned House*, 2000-2001



# MARK KLASSEN

## DISTRESS SIGNALS

In the rock-strewn expanse of southern California's mostly-uncivilized desert, a shiny new pay phone is a strange sight. Given the sizzling, early summer heat, one might reasonably expect it to be a mirage. So, it's disconcerting when the phone in question actually works—connecting whoever picks up the receiver to another voice in Long Island City, New York. Milwaukee-based artist Mark Klassen installed this seeming mirage, titled *Payphone Project*, for the 2006 exhibition "Interstate: The American Road Trip," which started near Joshua Tree at High Desert Test Sites and concluded at New York's Socrates Sculpture Park. While many of that show's artists took the idea of travel literally, Klassen employed telecommunications—in a somewhat anachronistic form, given the preponderance of cellular technology—to span the distant sites.

If *Payphone Project* intimates a friendly demeanor, with its wry contextual humor, it also signals the persistent role of technology and the infrastructure that shapes our daily lives. Klassen continually points to these fundamental structures in his body of work, even as implications of this grid of everyday systems—from communications to electricity to security—have become increasingly nebulous in years governed by the phrase "post-9/11." In a series of serigraphs produced in 2007, for example, a set of images of seemingly innocuous objects—a blanket, a pane of glass, an open cardboard box, a tollgate, mini-blinds—suddenly evokes alarm with a folding shade for a car's windshield that reads "CALL POLICE / HELP!"

In his "Outlaw Series" (2003), Klassen situated faux utility boxes at temporary sites around New York City. At an orange-alert moment of heightened tension, when any unauthorized addition to the urban landscape was eyed with suspicion, the artist designed the objects to be collapsible—and here, the word collapsible takes on a double meaning: the utility boxes are literally designed to pack flat for portability, quick set-up and take-down; they also collapse perceptually from three dimensions into two as one walks by and the artifice of the object is revealed. While surely recalling the blank proto-Modernist facades of Adolf Loos and the functionalist machine aesthetic of the Bauhaus, Klassen's human-scaled outlaw objects also slyly pay tribute to the anonymous designers of modern life.

More recent projects, which include a sequence of exploding, wall-mounted dashboard airbags and a partial reconstruction of a New Jersey tollbooth, draw attention to the underlying distress and potential for violence inscribed in our everyday objects, and the cold comfort of "national security." Rather than making flat-footed political statements, Klassen is confident enough to isolate the supposedly neutral but anxiety-ridden emblems of our paradoxical present so that we too might give them a closer inspection.

**Michael Ned Holte**  
Critic and Curator, Los Angeles

## ARTIST STATEMENT



## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Mark Klassen received his B.F.A. from Minnesota State University-Mankato (1995) and his M.F.A. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (1998). Klassen exhibits both nationally and internationally. This past year, he completed a series of screen prints that were included in the Armory Show in New York and designed an edition of artwork for New York-based North Drive Press. His work is included in the permanent collections at Minnesota State University, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Klassen is chair of the Department of Art and Art History at Beloit College. His website is [www.markdklassen.com](http://www.markdklassen.com).

## CHECKLIST

<i>Blanket</i> 2007 18 x 23 inches Serigraph	<i>Cardboard Box</i> 2007 18 x 23 inches Serigraph	<i>Window Blinds</i> 2007 18 x 23 inches Serigraph	<i>Artificial</i> Florescent Lighting 2008 42 x 2 x 6 inches wood, paint
<i>Window Shade</i> 2007 18 x 23 inches Serigraph	<i>Toll Gate</i> 2007 18 x 23 inches Serigraph	<i>Handrail</i> 2007 18 x 23 inches Serigraph	<i>New Jersey Toll Plaza</i> 2008 92 x 19 x 15 inches Wood, paint, glass
<i>Blue Awning</i> 2007 18 x 23 inches Serigraph	<i>Glass</i> 2007 18 x 23 inches Serigraph		<i>Safety Now!</i> 2008 Dimensions variable Airbags, conduit, control box



*Payphone Project NYC, 2006*

*Artificial Transformer, 2003*



*Window Shade, 2007*



*Artificial Florescent Light, 2008*

# DAN OLLMAN

## THEN HE JUST STARTED RANTING...

About ten years ago I was working as a house painter and architectural salvager when I had the inspiration to experiment in hack filmmaking along documentary lines. I had a desire to preserve in some way—in any way—the things I had come to love about the city of Milwaukee, a city I had always intended to leave but somehow have remained in most of my life. In addition to my obvious affection for the place, I was beginning to feel a mounting anxiety at the onslaught of outside forces set off by the fabulous tech boom. With this anxiety came a creeping sense of alienation at the sight of the population of my town transformed: suddenly everyone with the same haircut, bespectacled in lightweight dot-com-style glasses, and sporting a brand of “tude” I recognized from television. Who were these people anyway? Where did they come from and how and why were they buying everything? They closely resembled the people who used to tell me how much better Minneapolis was, and before that how cool it was in “San Fran,” and before that Chicago, New York...except this time they weren’t leaving and worse than that they seemed to be inviting others to partake of the same wonderful investment opportunity I used to call home.

One of the first things I thought to try to “catch on film” was the annual Christmas light displays that I had been seeing, strewn about houses, front yards and garages, or tacked up around apartment windows, for what seemed like forever. What I loved most about them was that despite the regularity of their appearance, each year there was a kind of wild unpredictability to them. Running the gamut from the truly inspired display by someone you imagined to be filled with “the spirit,” to the almost desperate gung-ho bulb bonanza of the maniac-enthusiast, to the dreary and dutiful “this is the last year we’re doing this” set up, the beauty of these spectacles lay in the sheer variety of their ingredients: lights, wire, tinsel and glass dating back to the ‘30s and ‘40s and added to decade after decade. No, they were not safe. Nor were they economical, which made them all the more wondrous, the perfect complement to the emotional schizophrenia of the holiday season.

The thing was, they were everywhere and I thought they always would be, but the fact is I waited too long to capture them. Judging by Milwaukee standards (which you should), 1999 was the zenith for Christmas lights in America. In that year, on the eve of the new millennium, every old bulb was pulled from every old box and every other house was dolled up supernova style to hail the Messiah and/or the end of the world. I rented a great 16mm camera and selected the perfect low light tungsten film. And did I capture the moment? No, I did not. I promised myself that I would get it the next year instead. 2000 came and went, sans Messiah. By Christmas 2001 most every single old-time Mazda, Soma, GE, Gimbel, Schuester, Schultz Bros., Woolworth and Winkie Blinky light had gone out. The glorious, roof-singeing reds, oranges and yellows; the tree-burning blues and greens; the snow-melting, flesh-zapping whites: all of them were gone, replaced by mile after mile of pre-fab webs of Wal-Mart winter waterfalls.

The point is, something I used to love so very much had somehow vanished overnight, replaced by something I now have to work hard at trying not to hate. And now that the lines have been redrawn, and the landscape has been divided up, the story itself is being retold—if not forgotten entirely—to suit the needs of these new owners. The greater point is that everything you love is going away. Perhaps it always has been. But I can’t help but wonder if it has ever happened with such speed and creepy efficiency, and for the benefit of so few at the cost of so many. In the all-for-one, none-for-all new world order, every last vestige of the truly unique, the quirky, or the unabashedly individual is under siege because in a for-profit world, if you cannot streamline it for mass consumption, it will be discarded, done away with in the name of progress. And with it, too, goes the authenticity of our context: the framework of familiar views and vistas and the old buildings and architecture that occupy them which in turn house the old bars and secret joints, the mom-and-pop stores and restaurants, the smells and reeks, the tastes and sights, the real music of culture that surrounds and defines the people and their lives in your town. All of this is being traded. For what? A chance to win the lottery? An opportunity to pay more and more for less and less? All that glimmer and glow, without even a chance to get warm.

**Paul Finger, on behalf of Dan Ollman**

## ARTIST STATEMENT

I've always seen film as an important instrument to reach the masses. Narrative or documentary, serious or funny—everybody wants to see a movie. For me, films dealing with social justice issues are important for the education and development of people around the world as well as for future generations. I hope to reach as many people as possible with my work, constructing a relationship that allows all of us to be in touch about what's really happening in the world.

I've made three films in the past year. Technology has allowed for many interesting conversations, and *World War Whatever* is a film about one of those conversations. *The Life Over There: The Black Neighborhood* is the first in a series of sociological studies, film portraits of specific neighborhoods and a few of the people they have produced. Finally, I've been working with Paul Finger on *Everything You Love is Going Away*.

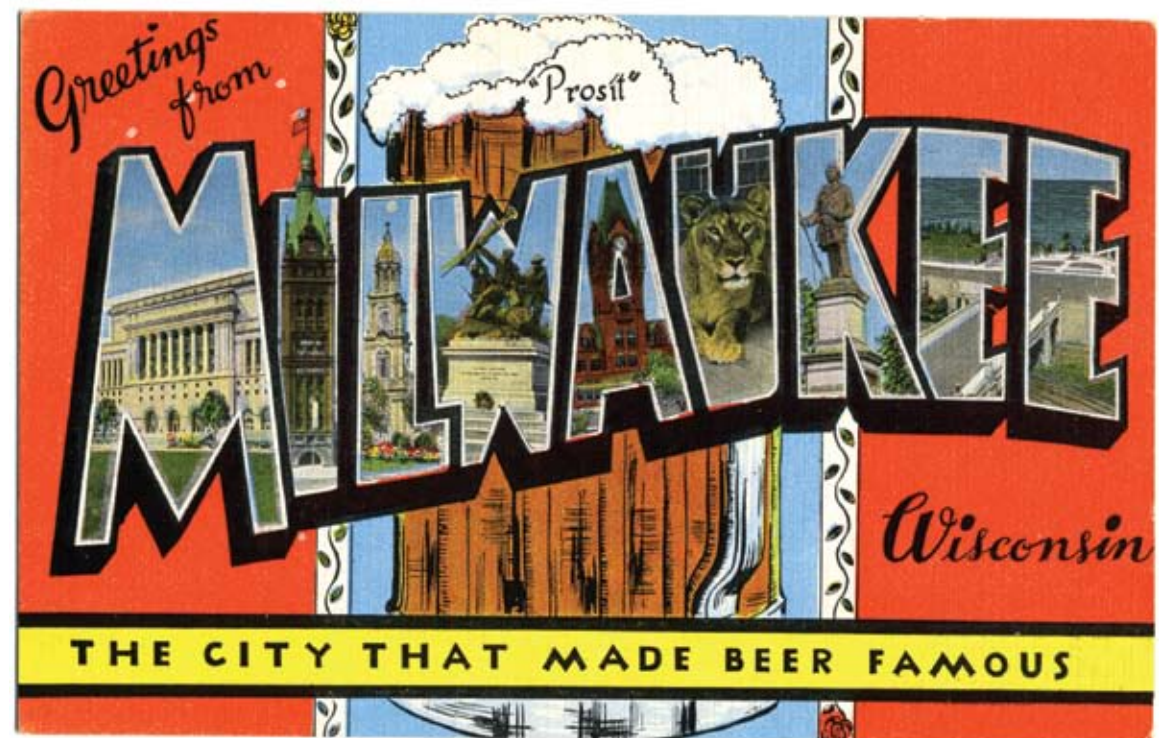
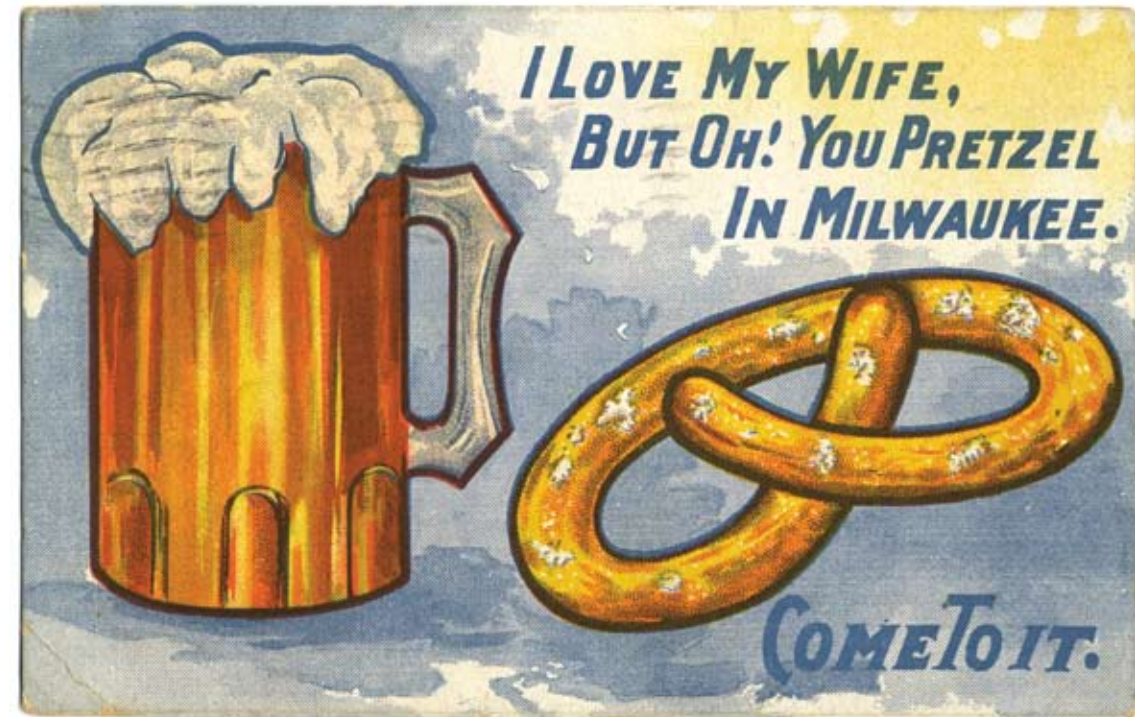
## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Dan Ollman was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Milwaukee: cheap living, cheap beer, and a restaurant with a dolphin. Although the restaurant with the dolphin doesn't exist anymore, Dan Ollman continues to live and work in Milwaukee. "It's the center of the world." Mr. Ollman says. "The dolphin represents that idea. If he [the dolphin] could live here, the most elegant and intellectual animal on the planet, why couldn't I?" Dan Ollman's various forays into cinema include: *The World's Most Greatest Eagle* (2006), *Suffering and Smiling* (2006) and *The Yes Men* (with Sarah Price and Chris Smith, 2004).

## CHECKLIST

*Montevideo Presents*, 2008

A collection of programming by Montevideo Films, furniture.

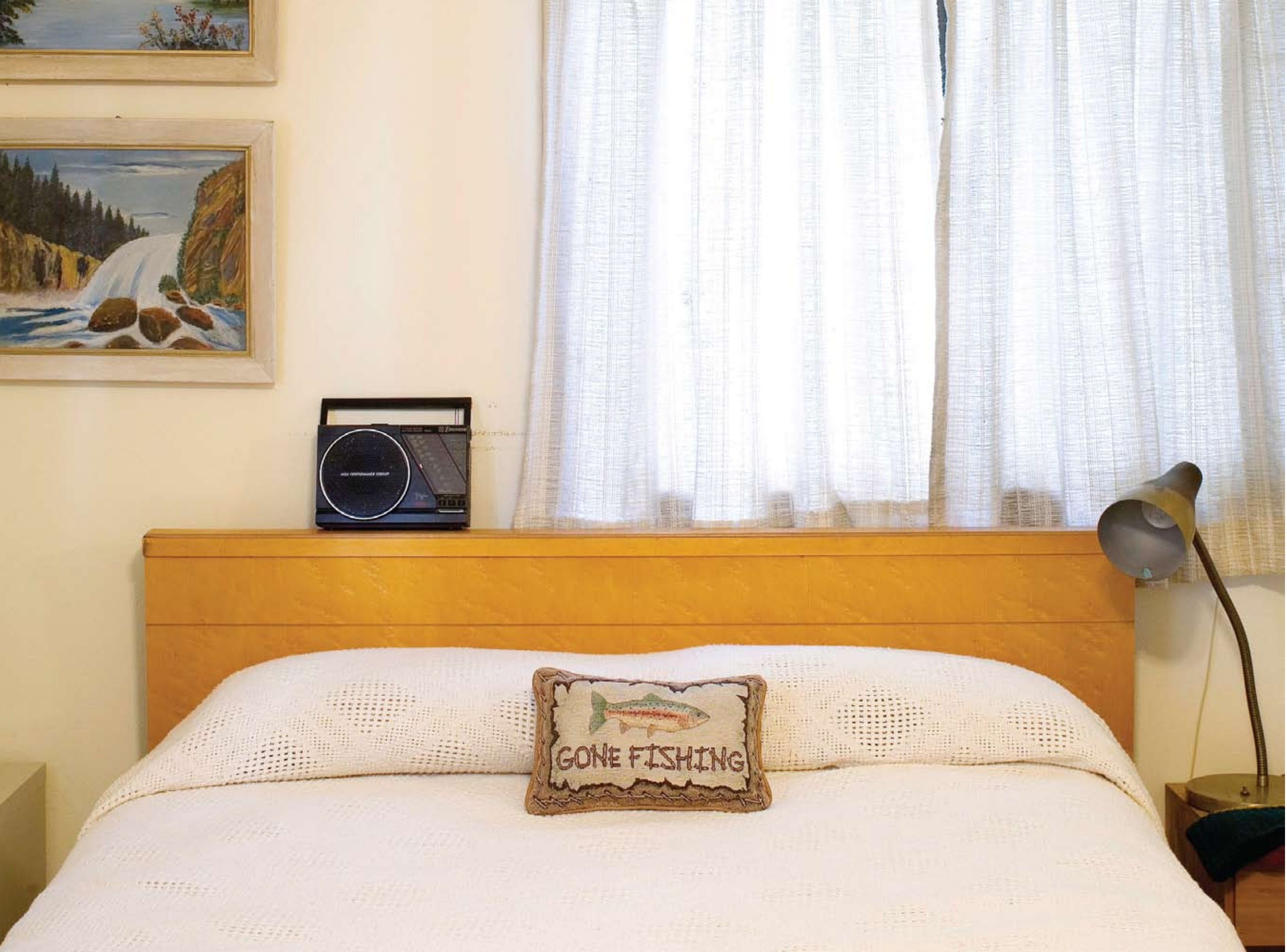




*The Life Over There: The Black Neighborhood, 2008*



*Rocket by Henry Wudtke (World War Whatever, 2008)*



EMERGING ARTISTS

# ANNIE KILLELEA

## THE NARRATIVE AT HAND

Annie Killelea has made films for fifteen years. She has always had a strong, stubborn, and singular sensibility—you have to, to make films for fifteen years. Experimental film, and by this I mean films made by a solitary filmmaker, is an expensive, difficult and rarified art form. Annie Killelea makes films, and I belabor this point to make clear that you know how her films are meant to be watched—huge, in a dark theater. Her films are stunning, her sense of space, both urban and pastoral, is impeccable. The colors explode with the palpable patience shown in each shot, waiting until the light is just so. The stage is set, beautifully.

Beauty is not everything, of course. We never linger anywhere on the screen, no matter how lovely, without purpose. Her work is sharp, and you need to watch closely. Killelea scatters little clues throughout her films; there is information to be gleaned in every shot. She only deviates from this economy when it comes to people. Here she indulges herself, shooting long, lingering close-ups of luminous faces. These are uncompromising and demanding shots. In her past work, these faces were often caught, stuck between sentences, or in awkward silence at a party, briefly derailed from the narrative at hand. In her new film, *Faces*, she slows down time as well, and the faces become trapped in an uncertain temporal space. The audience searches these faces for flickers of life—a twitch, a pulse—as the subject gazes at us with discomfort. In these shots, Killelea exposes herself, examining the role of director and the artifice of constructed emotions.

Killelea's characters fumble through life, their narratives fragmented or meandering. We learn their stories and fates obliquely, from other characters, or from the filmmaker herself. Watching Killelea's films is like moving through life: we are introduced, but never get past the first awkward stages of friendship. There is no cinematic baloney here, no montage sequences or forced back stories. Human interaction is halting and stilted. We gather our information and make our assessments based on hearsay. In a wickedly sly moment in *I Keep My Eyes Peeled*, a *New York Times* critic tells us in a voice-over that we are looking at young and famous artists, a conclusion she herself had just come to—and we have no choice but to believe her. In *Subtitle Trilogy*, we leave fiction behind, but the stories Killelea appropriates are again built on gossip or told by an unseen narrator; the main character is still elsewhere. In part three of the trilogy, *Nothing Happen*, we are adroitly brought back to reality. We witness a failed shot, hearing Killelea on the soundtrack saying "I don't think anything happened." She turns the camera to her sound man, who muses about what is more real, life or film. "You know, nothing happens, that is real," he concludes. It is within these moments of "nothing," however, that everything happens.

**Meredith Root, Animator**

**Assistant Professor of Digital Media, Memphis College of Art**

## ARTIST STATEMENT

I shoot and record my own media, but I feel more like I am collecting objects. I put these objects aside and then glue them back together later, when they become relevant. This is an ongoing part of my existence and a conscious decision never to throw anything away.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Annie Killelea is a filmmaker and musician based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She received a B.A. in English literature from Yale University in 1993, and an M.F.A. in film production from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 1998. In addition to making 16mm films, Killelea plays bassoon and flute with a variety of independent music groups. She also organizes and participates in conceptual projects that have included fashion shows, soundtracks and dramatic collaborations. Her most recent film, *Subtitle Trilogy*, screened at the White Columns Gallery in New York and the Wisconsin Film Festival in 2007. Previous venues have included the Donald Young Gallery in Chicago, Drake Hotel in Toronto, the Milwaukee Art Museum, Oberhausen Short Film Festival, the Telluride International Experimental Festival, and the Montreal International Film Festival.

## CHECKLIST

*Faces* (work in progress)

16mm

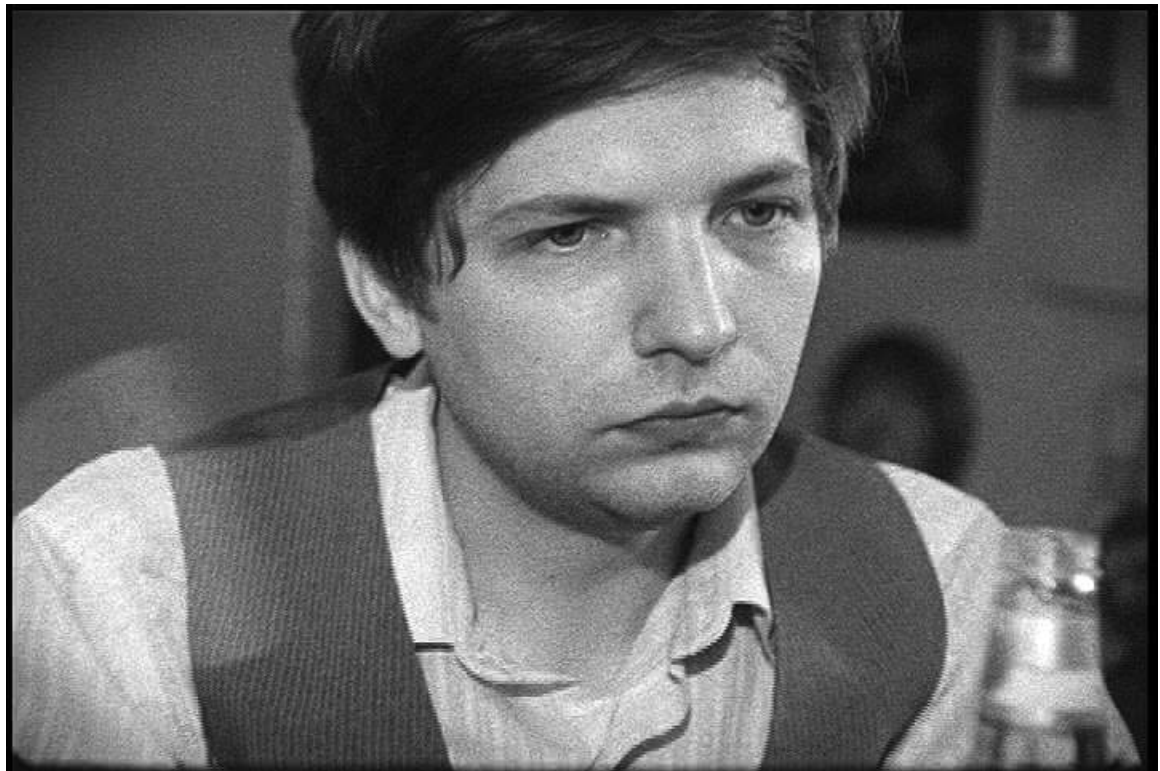
6 min. excerpt

Image credits

Left: *Faces*, 2008 (from 16mm black and white negatives)

Right: *Faces*, 2008 (from 16mm color negatives)





# FAYTHE LEVINE

## (EXTRA)ORDINARY: THE ART OF FAYTHE LEVINE

Faythe Levine is a force to be reckoned with. From the head of thick, long brown hair to the tattoos that cover much of her body, Levine's physical presence demands you take note. But no sooner are you jostled awake by her appearance, than you are disarmed by her quiet self-assurance—a calm confidence that is the trademark of those who are secure with their place in the world. It should come then as no surprise that her art—work that is often overshadowed by her other cultural contributions including writing, film, music, retail adventures, etc.—possesses that same sense of self-knowledge.

It is a rare treat to be exposed to Levine's lesser-known embroidery work (as well as her better-known efforts) in the Mary L. Nohl Fellowship exhibition. Graphic and poignant, Levine's embroidery and appliqué pieces carry much the same message as her other endeavors (self-reliance, independence, freedom of thought) but in a manner that appears to be closer to her heart.

Levine comes from a family of makers whose work powerfully speaks for itself (her great grandfather, Harry Levine, was a New York-based sculptor of some acclaim). There is no need to be told what to think; instead, Levine's work quietly instills you with its meaning. And just as the artist's physical presence demands you pay attention while putting you at ease, the colorful pieces featured here present you with an opportunity to contemplate the raging world around you while being blissfully comfortable in their presence.

Direct engagement with the world right outside her door is a hallmark of Levine's artistic output. And while this may tempt some to label it simplistic, it is anything but. Levine's art takes us to places we may have never imagined—or presents us with entirely new ways to imagine them—while keeping us firmly rooted in the society of which we (and they) are obviously a part. It is this unique ability to transcend the day to day while still being so firmly engaged in its excitement that is Levine's true gift—a gift she has, thankfully, decided to share with us.

**Andrew Wagner, Editor-in-Chief**  
*American Craft Magazine*

## ARTIST STATEMENT

My work encompasses my interest and investment in community, creativity and activism and how they can relate to one another. A part of my dedication to these themes is embracing a D.I.Y (Do It Yourself) lifestyle. This choice empowers me. It is a reminder that I have control over my life, not only through my artistic choices, but also in all mundane, day-to-day decisions.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Faythe Levine is an artist and organizer based out of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She is the founder and coordinator of Art vs. Craft, co-owner of brick and mortar space Paper Boat Boutique & Gallery, and does freelance curating and design. Levine recently completed her first documentary film, *Handmade Nation*, scheduled to premiere in 2009. She is the co-author of a book of the same title published by Princeton Architectural Press in 2008. Levine also plays the musical saw in the experimental musical group Wooden Robot. Her work has been discussed and reviewed in *The New York Times*, *Utne Reader*, *Paper Magazine* and *American Craft Magazine*.

## CHECKLIST

*Handmade Nation*, 2008

Tent, flag pennants, felt panel, film loop on monitor, book, postcards, posters.

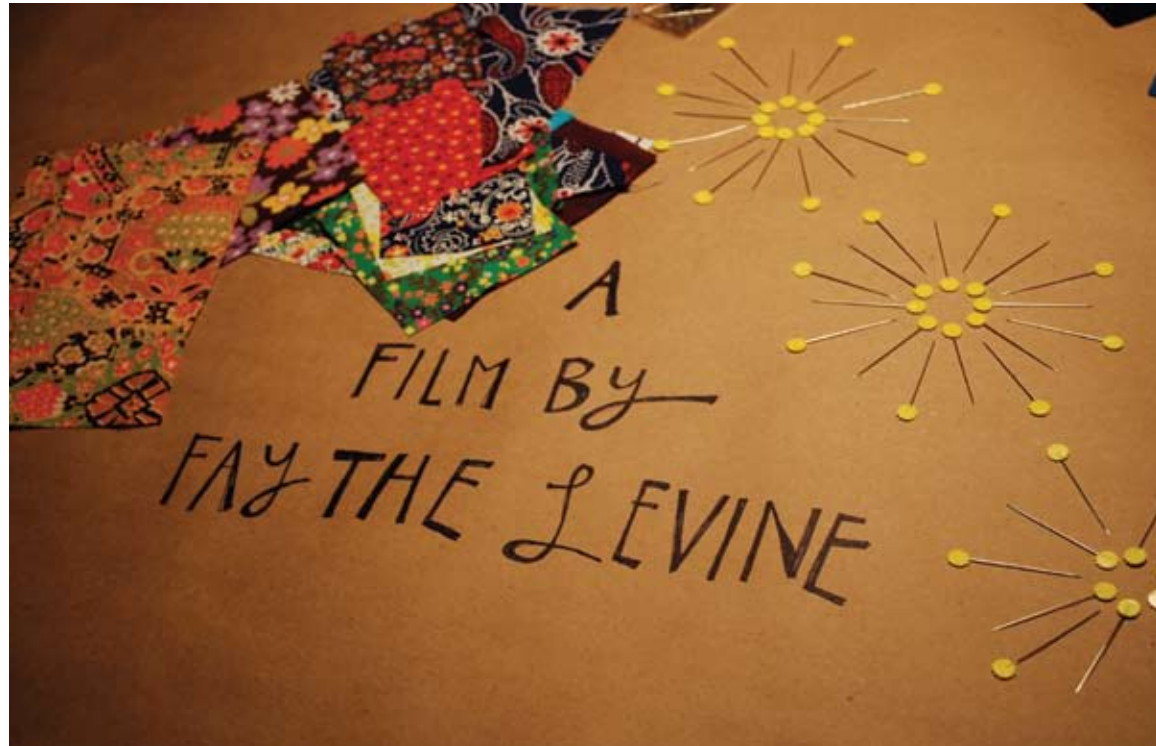
Wall panels composed of commissioned crochet runner, hand embroidery, wool panel:

*Craft Is Powerful*  
2008  
38 x 19 inches

*Craft Is Political*  
2008  
38 x 19 inches

*Craft Is Personal*  
2008  
38 x 19 inches

*Craft Is Possible*  
2008  
38 x 19 inches



Handmade Nation, 2008 (opening title sequence & production still, Jenine Bressner's studio, 2007)

Craftifesto Poster, 2008 (collaborators: Cinnamon Cooper, Amy Carlton, Kate Bingaman-Burt)

# COLIN MATTHES

## GRAPHIC ART

*Step right up and grab a grenade, folks! Stone the Prisoner and win big! Or try your aim at Shoot Into a Crowd—take out an enemy combatant and take home your choice of fantastic prizes!*

Foul amusements form the core of *War Fair: Occupation Games for Citizens and Non-Combatants*, Colin Matthes's carnival-themed installation for the Mary L. Nohl Fellowship exhibition. Some contests appear as drawings while others take sculptural form and ask to be played. There are targets to hit and loot to score. Amid this conflation of entertainment and violence, global politics and Americana, the festive and the anxious, what is the ersatz fairgoer to do? Have an ironic go at this distasteful mockery or humorlessly try to ignore it? Either way, a critical and unsettling participation results—there's no avoiding the unfair fair.

Matthes's installations often function this way, minus the consciously bad taste. In *Visiting Days* (2008), the viewer is surrounded and surveyed, caught between two monumental brick watchtowers and their tripod-loaded machine guns. The nine-foot-tall guard stations, drawn directly on facing gallery walls, join with small ink-on-paper pictures to convey an experience of incarceration from the visitor's perspective. Matthes's graphic style—flat, brusque, messy and bold—infects it all with an inescapable sense of urgency. And obsession: underneath those gazing guns, the towers' endless array of bricks, in all their differing repetitiveness, overwhelm and mesmerize. Their effect is matched and even exceeded by that of the waves and waves of water that overflow the backgrounds of *Over There* (2006-07), a series of paintings, drawings and one sculpture that engulfs the viewer in sinking oil rigs, smokestacks, industrial behemoths, pinstripe suits and infantrymen. The pictures' edges offer no respite; the intense, rippling seas of turquoise lines may as well be one giant ocean. There's no escape—not from the ocean or its vile denizens, nor from the black shapes that careen off the gallery walls and into the picture plane, morphing from black bird to bomber to shark.

Outside the gallery, Matthes employs alternate devices for agitating the viewer. The interventionist sculpture he recently mounted on a tree in a Milwaukee river corridor mimics a surveillance camera and confronts strollers with the possibility that they're being watched—that there's something that needs to be watched, not just in shopping malls but even in the woods. (That the camera is in fact a birdhouse hand-carved from a block of wood offers a humor far gentler than that of *War Fair*.) Matthes also works with the Just Seeds co-op and SAW, a global network of street art workers, to create and distribute agitprop zines, posters and prints. Graphic in more than one way, their two-dimensional media convey protest messages about factory farming, wage slavery, soldiering, and the need for a people's history.

Art operates politically here. It does this first and foremost in terms of subject matter, but also by engaging the viewer in an ethical, sensorial, comedic, discomfiting but always involving experience. The viewer is thus implicated—as we all are, like it or not, in the world.

**Lori Waxman**  
Critic and Art Historian

## ARTIST STATEMENT

Over the past sixteen years, I have worked with my father as an electrician at the county fair in my hometown of Jefferson, Wisconsin. My relationship to the fair and its motley assortment of demolition derbies, farm animals, carnival barkers, the God Mobile trailer, and cricket spitting contests is complicated, ranging from fondness to repulsion.

I am drawn to the chaos and the scrappy order of the fair—especially the signs and carnival games handcrafted from common materials. But I am disturbed by the increasing military presence, with Army recruitment tents and displays of child-sized Hummer vehicles presented as lighthearted county fair entertainment.

My experiences at the fair have influenced me to create a carnival game and a series of drawings that comment on war as spectacle and war as participatory game. *War Fair* transforms the viewer into a game player and asks, "How real does something have to become before you will not play (pay) anymore?"

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Colin Matthes makes drawings, prints, installations, sculpture and zines. His artwork has been exhibited in Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Denmark, Spain and Austria. In 2009, Matthes will have a solo exhibition at the University of Texas-Pan American and will create a wall drawing for a group exhibition at the Haggerty Museum in Milwaukee. Matthes self-publishes the art zine *Ideas in Pictures*, included in the upcoming exhibition "Heartland" at the Vannabemuseum, The Netherlands. He works on collective art projects including SAW ([www.streetartworkers.org](http://www.streetartworkers.org)), Cut and Paint ([www.cutandpaint.org](http://www.cutandpaint.org)), and Just Seeds / Visual Resistance ([www.justseeds.org](http://www.justseeds.org)). His website is [ideasinpictures.org](http://ideasinpictures.org)

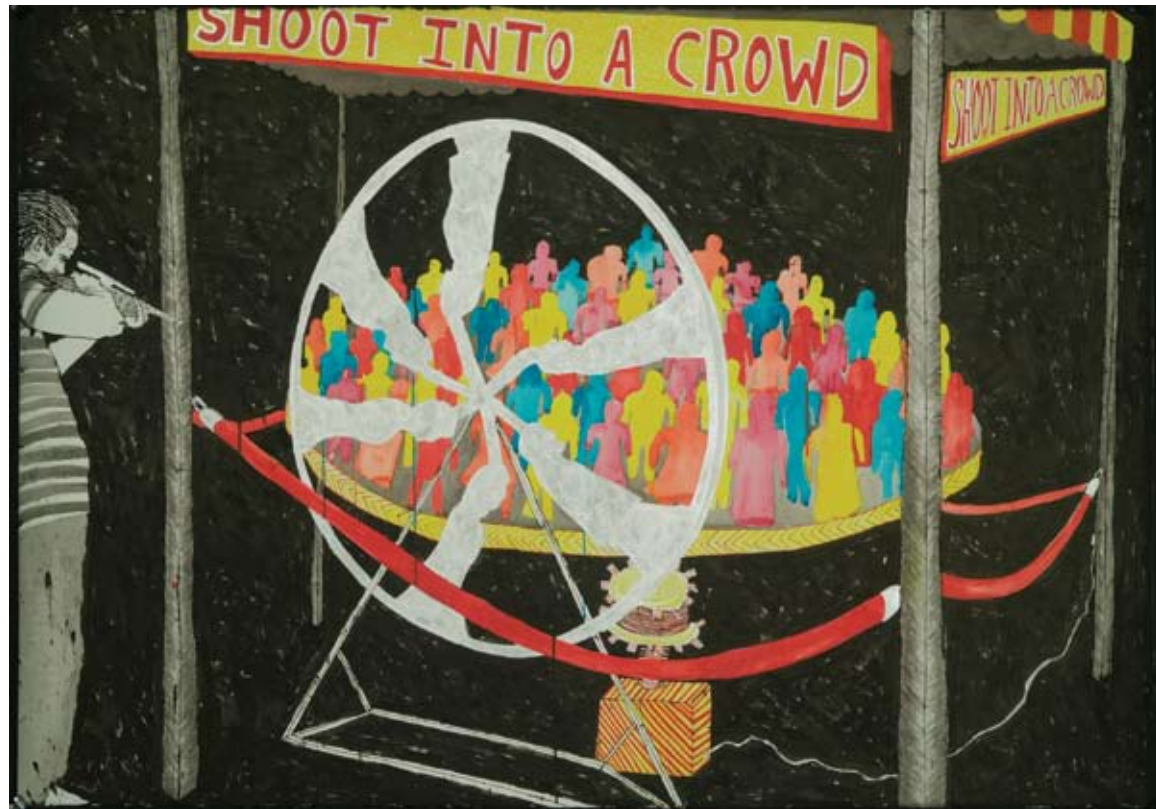
## CHECKLIST

*Fire in the Hole*  
2008  
10 x 9 x 14 feet  
Participatory sculpture

*War Fair: Occupation Games for Citizens and Non-Combatants*, 2008  
Installation including six drawings, 10 x 14 inches; two drawings, 42 x 60 inches (ink and mixed media on paper); wooden constructions.

*War Fair: Occupation Games for Citizens and Non-Combatants*, 2008 (zine)

<i>Stone the Prisoner</i> 2008 Wall drawing Dimensions variable	<i>How We Play</i> 2008 Wall drawing Dimensions variable
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WIN! **SHOOT INTO A CROWD** BIG!  
 \* RULES \*  
 \* \$5 BUYS ONE SHOT INTO THE CROWD \* SHOOT FIVE ENEMY COMBATANTS  
 WIN A LARGE PRIZE \* SHOOT AN INSURGENT WIN A MEDIUM PRIZE \*  
 SHOOT A SMALL CIVILIAN WIN A SMALL PRIZE \* SHOOT A LARGE CIVILIAN YOU LOSE  
 \* FRIENDLY FIRE YOU LOSE \* FOULS = DO OVER AND INCLUDE GUN OR BODY OVER FOUL  
 LINE \* RULES WILL CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE \* IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE RULES  
 PLEASE ASK IF YOU STILL DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE RULES DON'T PLAY! \* ALL DECISIONS BY  
 MANAGEMENT ARE FINAL! \* DO NOT OVERSPEND YOURSELF \* THANKS! MGMT \*

Shoot Into a Crowd, 2008  
 Rules for Shoot Into a Crowd, 2008



Stone the Prisoner, 2008  
 Big Payoff, 2008

# KEVIN J. MIYAZAKI

## HOME: KNOWN AND UNKNOWN

The search for home seems a particularly American phenomenon. For photographer Kevin Miyazaki, home is both a physical place and a psychologically resonant space where memory, history and aspirations collide. His evocative photographs have mined this territory, first in *Early Places*, an extended meditation on his childhood home in Milwaukee, and now in *Camp Home*, which grew from a quest to explore his father's experience during World War II.

Klamath Falls Basin is located in the upper reaches of California, just shy of the Oregon border. During World War II, Miyazaki's father was incarcerated there at Tule Lake, the largest of the ten concentration camps established by the United States government to imprison Americans of Japanese ancestry for the duration of the war. In February 1942, ignoring his own administration's intelligence, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, a presidential decree that paved the way for the largest forced relocation of civilians in modern American history. Initially, Japanese Americans were forbidden from living in western coastal regions; weeks later, the U.S. government began moving more than 110,000 civilians into temporary detention centers and finally to permanent camps. Citizenship was not a safeguard against this action: two-thirds of those incarcerated were Americans by birth.

Over 700 government-issued barracks were constructed on the dry lake bed at Tule Lake, creating what amounted to the largest population center in a region of wind-swept sagebrush. Miyazaki was curious about these barracks, which served as de facto homes to incarcerated Japanese Americans—among them his father, aged 13 when he entered the camp. After the war, as Miyazaki discovered, a large number of the structures were re-allocated through a homesteading initiative. Ironically, the prisons of Japanese Americans were transformed into places of independence—symbolic of the American dream of home ownership and a better life—for returning veterans.

Many of the hastily constructed, 65-year-old barracks are still in use today as barns, outbuildings and, most interestingly—homes. While Miyazaki was initially drawn to the physical structures of the barracks, the photographs that comprise *Camp Home* betray an interest in the evidence of human habitation, and hint at myriad stories contained within and around the four walls. Most of the remaining barracks have been lovingly, if modestly, adapted and show little sign of their former purpose. The people that settled in Klamath after the war may not bear specific responsibility for the incarceration, but they share a general sense that something happened. Their homes have a prior life worth recognizing, even if it was to house unjustly imprisoned civilians during world war. In his intimately observed photographs, Miyazaki refrains from political commentary and avoids evoking his family's connection to the place. Instead, his work operates in between what we know of the World War II incarceration and what we see in the images: a needlepoint pillow, family photographs, faint Japanese writing, a tic-tac-toe game. Each is suggestive of home, but ultimately the complexity of the life lived therein is unknowable. Instead, Miyazaki captures beautiful and intriguing fragments, suggestive of stories to come.

**Karin Higa, Adjunct Curator**  
**Japanese American National Museum, Los Angeles**

## ARTIST STATEMENT

My work focuses on remains: remains of sacred and public places, of family history, of memory. Because I work in photography, my pictures become evidence. In the series *Camp Home*, I document the reuse of Japanese internment camp barracks at Tule Lake in Northern California. The evidence collected is not that of my own family, though they once occupied one of these buildings. Instead, I focus on the physical remains of farm families who used the structures on their homesteads following the war, and whose own family histories have been formed within their walls. It is the continuation of lives lived within the space that I choose to document, and the connection to my own family and its stories lies somewhere just below the surface.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Kevin J. Miyazaki is a photographer based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He earned a B.A. in graphic design from Drake University. His editorial portrait and travel work appears in national magazines.

## CHECKLIST

All photographs 2008

*4358B-19617 (fly swatter)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*4534D-19617 (balls)*  
16 x 18 3/4 inches

*5042A-19617 (flowered tree)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*4525C-19617 (calendar)*  
16 x 18 3/4 inches

*5054B-19617 (bed)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*5073B-19617 (picture)*  
16 x 18 3/4 inches

*5073C-19617 (curtains)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*4585A-19617 (metal siding)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*4358A-19617 (jar)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*4534F-19617 (bunk room)*  
16 x 18 3/4 inches

*5032A-19617 (family pictures)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*4525A-19617 (tree)*  
16 x 18 3/4 inches

*4534B-19617 (flagpole)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*5073A-19617 (siding layers)*  
16 x 18 3/4 inches

*4525B-19617 (handwriting)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*5085B-19617 (tic-tac-toe)*  
16 x 18 3/4 inches

*4503A-19617 (bird's nest)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*5054A-19617 (antlers)*  
16 x 18 3/4 inches

*4534A-19617 (bedroom)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*5075A-19617 (garage wall)*  
16 x 18 3/4 inches

*4534E-19617 (sink)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*5100A-19617 (basketball hoop)*  
16 x 18 3/4 inches

*5085F-19617 (plates)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*5085D-19617 (hats)*  
16 x 18 3/4 inches

*3070A-19617 (mobile)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches

*5062A-19617 (red steps)*  
16 x 18 3/4 inches

*4493A-19617 (knocker)*  
18 3/4 x 16 inches



5032A-19617 (family pictures), 2008



4534B-19617 (flagpole), 2008

SUITCASE  
EXPORT  
FUND  
THE GREATER MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION'S MARY L. NOHL FUND  
FOR  
INDIVIDUAL  
ARTISTS 2007

The Suitcase Export Fund was created to increase opportunities for local artists to exhibit outside the four-county area and to provide greater visibility for individual artists and their work as well as for Greater Milwaukee. In its fifth cycle, the Fund provided assistance with shipping, travel and promotion to sixteen individual artists. These artists—two of them past Nohl Fellows—work in a range of media. Their exhibitions took them to locations throughout the United States and to Germany, Spain, Canada and Taiwan.



**Fred Stonehouse**, a 2005 Nohl Fellow, attended the opening of "4 Faces of Foofaraw" at Feinkunst Kruger in Hamburg, Germany, where he sold several works, met German artists, and established a relationship with the gallerist leading to long-term representation.

**Josie Osborne** participated in a residency at Fundacion Valparaiso in Almeria, Spain. Residency activities included an artist's talk and an exhibition of her work. The work she made in response to the architecture, music and poetry of Andalusia will be seen in Milwaukee, Charlotte, NC, and Florida.

**Brent Budsberg** and **Shana McCaw** created a site specific solo sculptural installation at Galerie Sans Nom in Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada. The exhibition, "Escapisms," brought their collaborative work to a new audience in a new region and fostered their involvement with Canadian Artist-Run Centers.

**Kendall Polster** used his award to ship work to and attend the opening of "Four Artists, Four Walls" at Lindsay Gallery in Columbus, OH. Polster sold much of his work and was subsequently featured in the gallery's booth at Artropolis in Chicago.

**Karen Gunderman** shipped two large ceramic works to the juried Taiwan Ceramics Biennale 2008 at the Taipei Yingge Ceramics Museum.

**Brent Coughenour** took his feature-length film, *I Pity the Fool*, on a week-long tour, presenting it at venues in Providence, Boston, New Haven, Baltimore and New York, NY. The tour included a live audio-visual performance using custom-written software for algorithmic manipulation of audio and visual source materials at the "Leap Before You Look Festival" in Brooklyn, NY.

**Peter Barrickman**, a 2003 Nohl Fellow, was a resident artist at Centraltrak, a news artist residency program at the University of Texas at Dallas. While there, he presented his work at an exhibition, "Parsing Grammars of Painting"; met local artists and collectors; and laid the groundwork for a larger exhibition in Dallas in 2009.

**Chris Miller** and **Mark Winter** rented a truck to take themselves and their work to the Mad Art Gallery in St. Louis for "Working Hard at Playing with Yourself," a group exhibition.

**Beth Bojarski** exhibited two dozen paintings and an installation piece at Varnish Fine Art in San Francisco. This was her first solo exhibition.

**Kim Miller** participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Transmodern Festival at Load of Fun Studios in Baltimore, MD. Her presentation, *Power Anywhere There's People*, included video work and live performance art and created a space for radical democratic experiment. "Is a radical democratic experience possible?" asks Miller. "As an artist, I want to help say yes."

**Juliet Jaeger** was invited to exhibit two large drawings in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Great Lakes Drawing Biennial at Eastern Michigan University, juried by Charles McGee.

**Jeremy Lundquist's** print was included in "Printmaking IS the Discourse," a curated exhibition at *commandprint*, the Southern Graphics Council's 37<sup>th</sup> annual conference. The exhibition is scheduled to travel from Virginia Commonwealth University to the University of Akron and the University of Notre Dame.

**Paul Calhoun** received support for the first leg of an exhibition about contemporary life in the former Soviet Union. He traveled to the Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center in Cambridge, MA for the opening and a public forum. The exhibition, which includes more than 30 of his photographs, is scheduled to travel to the Abrons Center for the Arts in New York City and the Moscow Museum of Modern Art.

**Colette Oद्या Smith** is participating in the "Near and Far Horizons World Tour of Contemporary Artists," a two-year tour of work by 30 painters juried in from Landscape Artists International and International Plein Air Painters. Three of her works are currently on tour.

## **THE INSTITUTE OF VISUAL ARTS**

Since 1996, the Institute of Visual Arts (Inova) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has established an international reputation as a contemporary art research center. The mission of the Institute of Visual Arts is to engage the general and university publics with contemporary art from around the world through exhibitions and programs. The Institute is recognized for the high quality of its programs and for the opportunity it offers artists to experiment in the creation of new work.

**Support for this exhibition and catalogue has been provided by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Mary L. Nohl Fund and the Peck School of the Arts.**

## **UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE**

### **CHANCELLOR**

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### **PROVOST AND VICE CHANCELLOR FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

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### **CURATOR**

NICHOLAS FRANK

### **CREDITS**

EDITOR: POLLY MORRIS

DESIGN: CRAIG KROEGER

Visual Arts Milwaukee (VAM!) links local visual arts organizations to increase the quality of local artistic presentation and production as well as to bring greater local, national and international attention to Milwaukee's institutions and artists. The Mary L. Nohl Fund Individual Artist Fellowships and Suitcase Export Fund are the major projects of VAM!.

Special thanks to Ellen Ash, Jolie Collins, Nicholas Frank, Lee Ann Garrison, Bruce Knackert, Mark Lawson and Mary McCoy.

Established Artist title image: Mark Klassen, *Artificial Florescent Light*, 2008

Emerging Artist title image: Kevin J. Miyazaki, *4534A-19617 (bedroom)*, 2008

# ←--SPINE

MARY L. NOHL FUND FELLOWSHIPS FOR INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS 2007

INSTITUTE OF VISUAL ARTS



PECKSCHOOL  
OF THE ARTS