

MANIFEST

v37



MASTER PIECES 2009



MANIFEST

CREATIVE RESEARCH GALLERY
AND DRAWING CENTER

volume 37

MASTER PIECES 2009

MANIFEST is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

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Manifest Creative Research Gallery and Drawing Center

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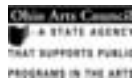
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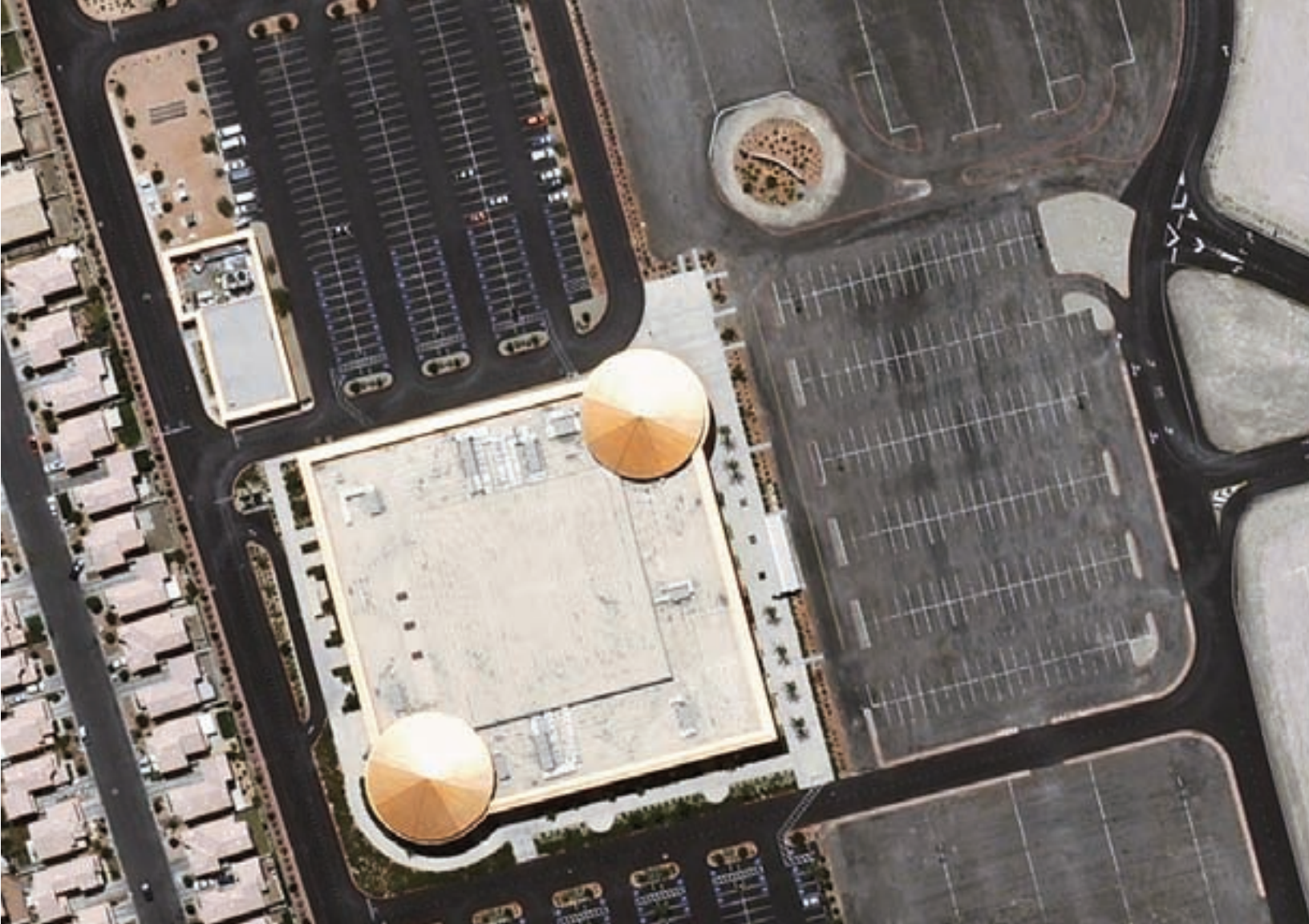
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MASTER PIECES 2009

July 10 - August 7, 2009

Meredith Adamisin (Northville, Michigan)

John Carrasco III (Lincoln, Nebraska)

Kyle Chaput (Corpus Christi, Texas)

Hima Chennamaraju (Indianapolis, Indiana)

Benjamin Clore (East Lansing, Michigan)

Rachel Heberling (Lewisburg, Pennsylvania)

Robert Hernandez (Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts)

Josh Johnson (Lincoln, Nebraska)

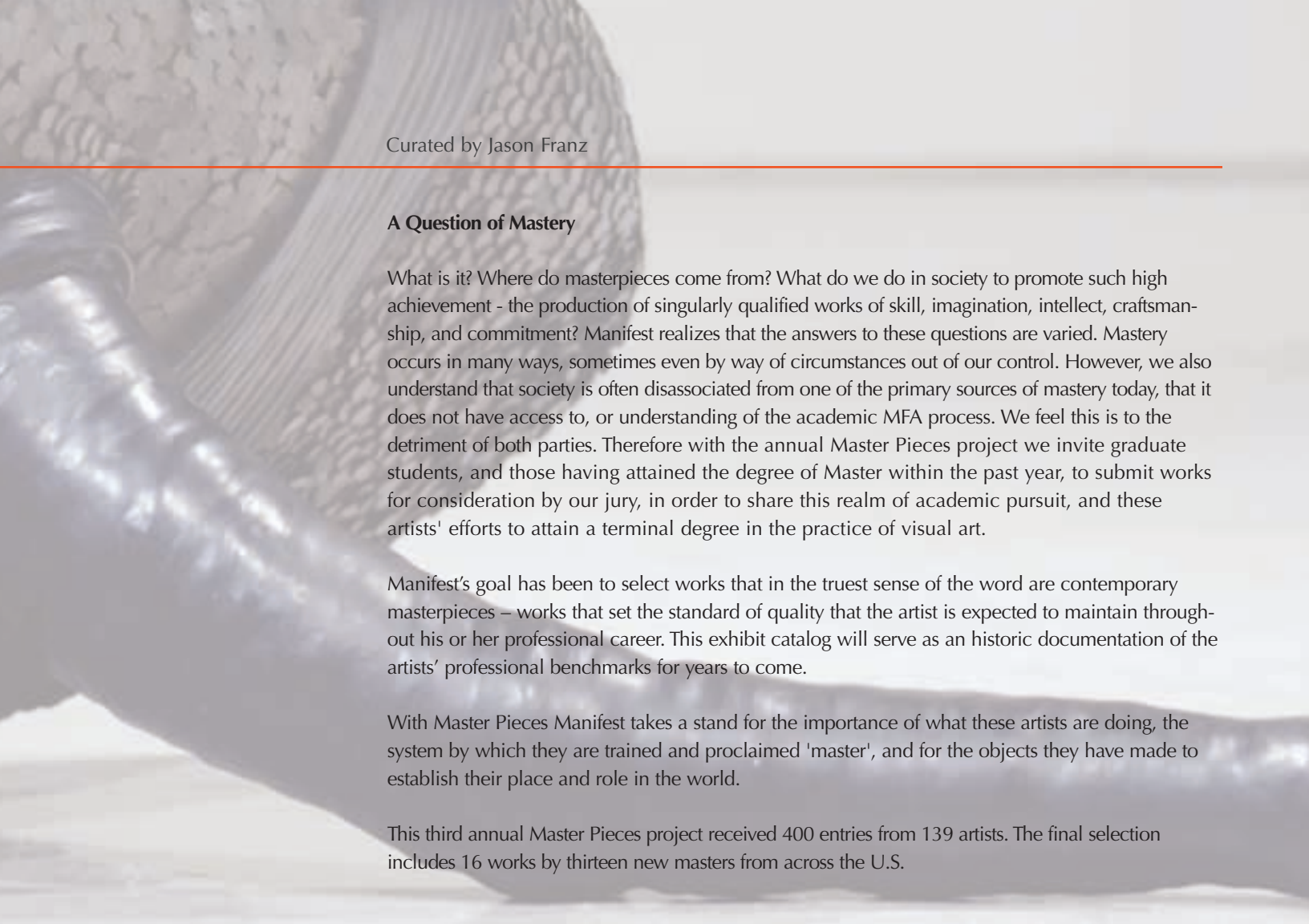
Sonia Lea (Bloomington, Indiana)

Robert Minervini (San Francisco, California)

Travis Shaffer (Nicholasville, Kentucky)

Japheth Storlie (Maquoketa, Iowa)

Kimberly Strom (DeKalb, Illinois)



Curated by Jason Franz

A Question of Mastery

What is it? Where do masterpieces come from? What do we do in society to promote such high achievement - the production of singularly qualified works of skill, imagination, intellect, craftsmanship, and commitment? Manifest realizes that the answers to these questions are varied. Mastery occurs in many ways, sometimes even by way of circumstances out of our control. However, we also understand that society is often disassociated from one of the primary sources of mastery today, that it does not have access to, or understanding of the academic MFA process. We feel this is to the detriment of both parties. Therefore with the annual Master Pieces project we invite graduate students, and those having attained the degree of Master within the past year, to submit works for consideration by our jury, in order to share this realm of academic pursuit, and these artists' efforts to attain a terminal degree in the practice of visual art.

Manifest's goal has been to select works that in the truest sense of the word are contemporary masterpieces – works that set the standard of quality that the artist is expected to maintain throughout his or her professional career. This exhibit catalog will serve as an historic documentation of the artists' professional benchmarks for years to come.

With Master Pieces Manifest takes a stand for the importance of what these artists are doing, the system by which they are trained and proclaimed 'master', and for the objects they have made to establish their place and role in the world.

This third annual Master Pieces project received 400 entries from 139 artists. The final selection includes 16 works by thirteen new masters from across the U.S.

False Bodies and Phantom Limbs

Simply stated, I would call myself an artist who makes prints of the human form. I also attempt to approximate the human condition and fundamentally my own. My thesis body of work explores the boundary of psychological and physical within the human body. Originally rooted in personal struggle and scientific fascination, the work now encompasses a much larger and more universally profound interaction. Body dysmorphia provides those who are afflicted with it, the perception of a physicality that does not exist; a false body, and more cruelly, the inability to decipher it. Building on the idea of a false body, the work also gains inspiration from the neurological phenomena of phantom limbs. The sensory residue of an appendage that is no longer part of the body, phantom limbs are described as sensory ghosts, they take on extra-sensory characteristics, much like a dysmorphic false body. Fundamentally, psychology and physiology are disconnected; cognition throws a kink in our biological plan.

Meredith Adamisin
MFA 2009, Miami University

Part of a series, the ten etchings of my thesis are all personal interpretations of my own bodily experience over time. Using mark, I explore essential aspects of the body: weight, posture, gravity, volume, mass and force. The figures are framed like portraits within the picture plane and hung like them as well. They are life size and isolated. Miniature marks accumulate over this time to map the form. Ranging from enlarged pore-like, to obscure alien-like, to skin and scale-like, to ultra-plush fur; the marks and forms extend beyond physical experience because they do not make sense. In addition to simple and assertive space the combination of familiar and unfamiliar forms create a psychophysical paradox.



Memories form, memories fade, and memories are lost. Small cavities of emptiness replace memories that have drifted away, where they then spread like thin cracks on the surface and diverge to form a void. Within the hollows of these voids, perplexities in mental and physical conditions emerge. Such perplexities of the void have captured my attention, and with this body of work, defining and embodying the mental void within a physical presence is my ultimate goal.

“Detour” is the symbolic nature of a crack forming on the surface of memory erosion. The movements of each section twist and turn, connecting together, creating a detoured path, the beginnings of memory loss. Both discord and harmony co-exist within the work in the form of an unstable physical balance.

John Carrasco III

MFA 2009, University of Nebraska-Lincoln



Detour, plywood w/steel hardware, 5' x 4.5' x 20', 2007



We are in a time of unexplainable, structural confusion. Often stricken by complex medical conditions and tangled in alien environments we continually question our inner stability and sense of place. The series of lithographs I am currently working on reveal those struggles I deal with while attempting to manifest my battle with Crohn's disease. It's these unsettling events that pierce through my conscious and subconscious thoughts, pressing me to establish aberrant 'sites' in a period of needed personal refuge.

Kyle Chaput

MFA Candidate, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi



Oso Bay Site 46 (opposite)

Oso Bay Site 47 (above and next page detail), Lithographs, 25" x 33" x 3", 2009







Through my eyes, the world is a colossal, dynamic, three-dimensional painting. It is bursting with fascinating forms with constantly changing colors. The shifting seasons mesmerize me every year as though I am experiencing them for the first time. The forms and shapes of everyday objects and the way they interact with each other bound me wordless. By no means can I isolate a color and declare that it is my favorite. I believe that every color perceived by the human eye has its individual significance and its own purpose of existence.

During the preliminary years of my painting, I was more enthralled by just the colors and my paintings were limited to landscapes and still lives. Recently I discovered my love for human figure painting. The light bouncing off of the human figure and the casting of the shadows fused with the intricate positioning of hands and feet; coupled with the unfathomable expression in the eyes makes a perfect composition for my paintings.

The complex dynamic nature of human figure intrigues me endlessly and provides a never-ending concoction of ideas to work with.

Hima Chennamaraju

MFA Candidate, University of Indianapolis



My ceramic sculpture is an investigation of labor, routine, compulsion, and repetition. The multiple is important to my work and I'm interested in the visual transformation that occurs when a single object is accumulated creating a composition made of many. The fragility of clay and balance of form offer a precarious tension between the viewer and the piece. For me the concept of unity and variety is always a point of departure where organic visual elements are combined with contrasting rigid geometric structures. I utilize the slip casting method to produce a large numbers of porcelain objects. These objects are then fused together with glaze in the kiln to create complex and dynamic forms. Often my finished pieces are monochromatic or unfinished revealing their materiality. My work could also be viewed as a type material study where objects become transformed through the medium in which they are recreated. I study ceramics, but I believe it is valuable to experiment with a variety of material to find one that best suits the idea.

Benjamin Clore

MFA Candidate, Michigan State University



As I travel through condemned industrial landscapes of vacant factories, I am driven to convey my experience: senses of foreboding and anxiety mixed with nostalgia. A displaced figure, a blank diagram, or a map leading nowhere signify traces of an abandoned industrial revolution, specifically in the coal regions of my native Pennsylvania.

In order to represent this imagery, I have found a direct connection with the medium of printmaking. Elizabeth Olds, Harry Sternberg, Harry Gottlieb, and Louis Lozowick have documented the very same mines and steel mills through printmaking, hired by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s. As a response to the recently eradicated past, I render the cracked and peeling textures of decayed industry through the processes of an historical medium.

Rachel Heberling

MFA Candidate, Ohio State University

In a society that focuses on advancement and change, I wish to also document what is lost in transition. All innovations will soon be archaic, and all that is familiar will soon be forgotten. I question our blind faith in progress.



French cultural theorist, and philosopher Jean Baudrillard describes a kind of hysterical condition of our time. "What society seeks through production and overproduction is the restoration of the real which it escapes." Modern society has become fascinated with the proliferation of new and temporary distractions that are in constant competition for the accumulation and attention of audiences.

My drawings are an investigation into the seemingly limitless production of imagery by the mechanisms of mass culture. I am interested in locating the intersections between fictional and non-fictional elements of politics, entertainment, corporate culture, fashion, military

operations and consumer culture. I appropriate images from various media outlets, sources, and genres. The most recent body of work consists of several

Robert Hernandez

MFA Candidate, School of the Museum of Fine Arts-Boston

drawings in multitudinous styles. The images are layered one on top of another, which create incongruent compositions. My intentions are to engage the viewer by involving him or her in the search for complete figures, linear narratives among the mass of accumulated images. Depictions of violence are combined with placid cartoon smiles reflecting a kind of systematic desensitization of an over stimulated populous.



My current body of work derives from notions of an inward nature. Not vital organs, cellular structures, or even emotions, but things that are difficult to put your finger on for very long. Things like the lump in the pit of your stomach or the itch in your mind that turns sleep into a game, conditions that both stifle and propel an individual. These sensations are far more interesting to me than the circumstances that may create them.

With these thoughts in mind, I approach my studio research not intending to give form to these unnamed sensations, only to let them influence my formal considerations and impact the psychological tone of my work. In most instances, I reference visible forms, but blur their identities causing them to flicker between something recognizable and something unknown. This approach allows me to cooperate with the intangibility of something faceless and abstract.

Josh Johnson

MFA Candidate, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Coupled with this direction is the drive to employ conventional materials in an unconventional fashion. Items as diverse as wood glue, carpet tacks, and soaker hose become surfaces invented to conceal a polystyrene form and create fleeting illusions of mixed medias. The age-old standbys of carving, repetition, form, and texture serve in a formal alliance with modern synthetic materials to produce object-based sculptures that are simultaneously traditional and experimental.



Sonia Lea

MFA 2009, Indiana University

I have been accused of self-deprecating humor and of being too interested in my fingernails. These paintings are about both of those things. As a child, I began each school year by begging for a new binder and folders (all color coordinated). Because, this year I was going to be organized and a good student! Inevitably, homework was never put in the right folder because I was too busy doodling in my brand new notebook and another school year passed the same as the year before. Now, I like to fantasize about how the right shoes might make me a better teacher.

The irony of my actual life contrasted with my fantasies amuses me. In these paintings, I tried to create a sense of contrast. By making two spaces in the paintings, for example the inside and outside of a doorway, I hoped the viewer would compare one to the other. I tried to heighten the comparison through the use of lights and darks. These spaces in these paintings are meant to feel everyday. And the fantasies I am illustrating are meant to be somewhat silly. I am trying to share my own self-amusement with the viewer.



Perspectives on Teaching: I May Not Know What I Am Doing, But At Least My Outfit Looks Good (opposite), 72" x 54", 2009

Realistic Bedroom Scene: There Are No Pets or Footy PJs in The Victoria's Secret Catalog (above and next page), oil on canvas, 60" x 84", 2009





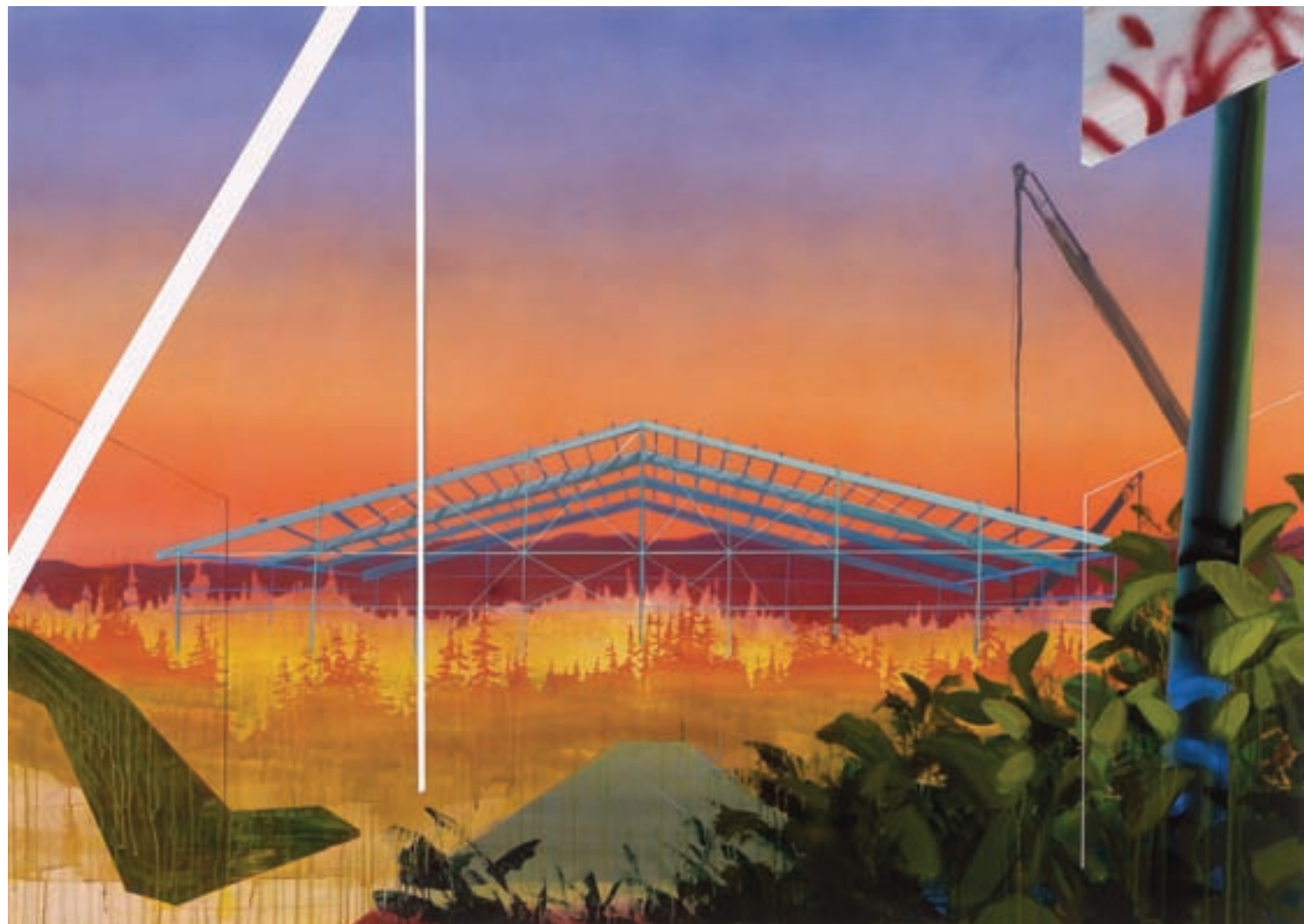


Robert Minervini

MFA 2009, San Francisco Art Institute

My work is primarily based on the intersection of nature and culture within the dialogue of 19th century heroic landscape painting. I appropriate this symbolic form of representation associated with the pastoral and idyllic landscape in order for me to reinterpret a contemporary relationship to the natural and handmade world. By evoking the notion of the sublime through a highly plasticized approach to color and form, I wish to question aspects of beauty and aesthetics associated with the pictorial depiction of nature as well as the artifice of pictorial representation itself.

The narrative elements in my work allude to non-linear time and often utilize a voyeuristic cinematic perspective in order to engage the viewer as a witness and participant. I want to allow my audience to fill in their role in the narrative, and to remain in a timeless moment, like in a daydream, between reality and the imaginary.



Eleven Megachurches*

“The result is a wash: rather than making America more Christian, the megachurches have simply succeeded in making Christianity more American”

- Jesus, CEO, The Economist, December 2005

This work is interested in issues of access and diversity; land-use/infrastructure and the automobile; and the formation of isolated communal brands. It seeks to coax its audience into open dialogue about the impact of the church as a building and an institution, along with differences between its implied and actual purposes and responsibilities.

Travis Shaffer

MFA Candidate, University of Kentucky

As one views these works, gathered using stitched Google Satellite imagery, there is an obvious repetition of sprawling parasitic parking lots, coupled with cul-de-sac laden homogenous housing developments and swimming pools, all icons of a distinctly American and more distinctly middle class ex-urban/suburban landscape.

*churches with an average weekly attendance of greater than 2000.

Central Christian Church, Henderson NV (opposite)

Willow Creek Community Church, S. Barrington, IL, Henderson NV (next page)

C- Prints, 40" x 40", 2009





Recollections of Paradise Lost

Japheth Storlie

MFA 2009, Louisiana State University

For the past two and a half years, I have traveled the back roads and byways of rural, Southern Louisiana. As a non-native of Louisiana, my adventuring began with a curiosity of the unfamiliar and a fascination with Southern culture. At first, I was engaged in a peripheral study of architecture, signage, and decaying structures in a desolate landscape. As I narrowed my focus to the plethora of destroyed/abandoned homes that I frequently encountered, I began to contemplate the loss of my own childhood home. I thought about the implications of such a loss on a child's psyche and the possible effects that it could have on development and personality. What began as a superficial study ultimately became honed introspection.

What I am most interested in is the feeling of despondent isolation that emanates from these environments and the subtle narratives that I create. These narratives are meant to captivate and enchant and at the same time, disturb and haunt. My goal is to isolate the viewer in this space, much like each building is isolated in its own environment; and in turn, trigger a viewer's recollection and associations of times long past.



The intersections or overlapping of art with ecology, geography, political and cultural history, and especially everyday life, contain interesting avenues of exploration and limitless possibilities for discovery. My work, photographic, performative, and otherwise, broadly deals with place revealed through relationships.

Kimberly Strom

MFA 2009, Northern Illinois University

My work responds to the complexities and reciprocities of relationships between self and place evidenced by simple gestures of the body, quotidian rituals, and unspoken connections that express a need to belong to a place, a home and community, as well as within a story, one's own or another's history.

The trees are one of my attempts to preserve something that is disappearing, but as they are presented as lacy cut-outs floating in shadow boxes, they seem to be remnants of something already gone. Through the laborious, meditative process of cutting the individual branches these oaks have become both relic and beginning.



About Manifest

Founded in May of 2004, Manifest Creative Research Gallery and Drawing Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit arts organization headquartered in the urban neighborhood of East Walnut Hills in Cincinnati, Ohio. The elegant street level exhibition space is minutes away from downtown Cincinnati, and the numerous academic institutions of higher learning in the region. It is also within easy walking distance of a diversely populated historic neighborhood with residents from all walks of life. The galleries are free and open to the public five hours a day, five days a week, presenting works by students and professionals from around the world. The Manifest Drawing Center Studio is located in the nearby Walnut Hills Essex Studios Complex.

Manifest is supported by grants and public donations and has the goal to support student professionalism, integrate the arts into the urban residential community and raise the bar on artistic standards. The mission also includes the exploration of the relationship between art and design, as well as the ongoing support and display of drawing in all its various forms.

Mission

Manifest stands for the quality presentation, experience, and documentation of the visual arts, engaging students, professionals, and the public from around the world through accessible world-class exhibits, studio programs, and publications.

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Gallery Assistant

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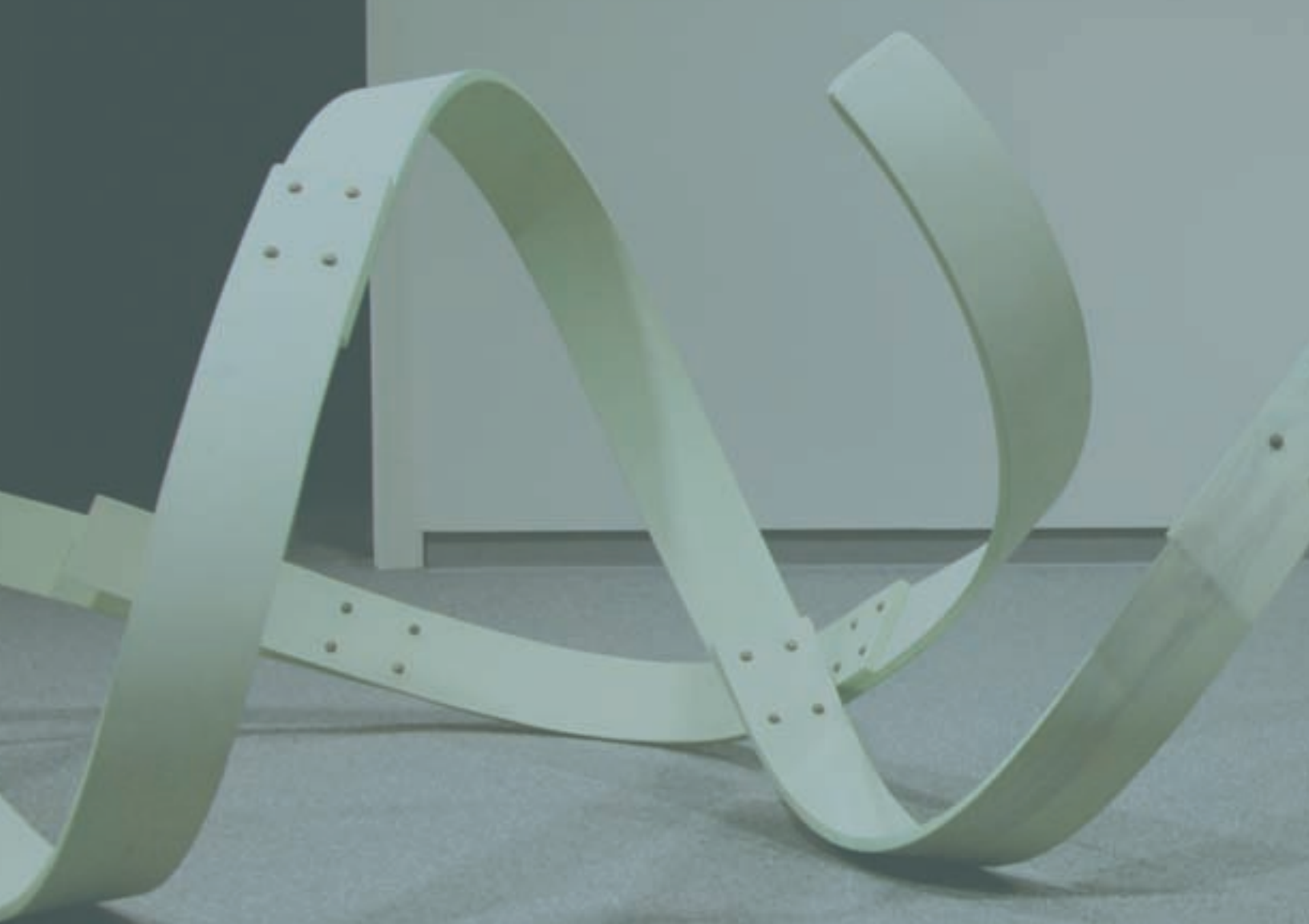
Jason Franz

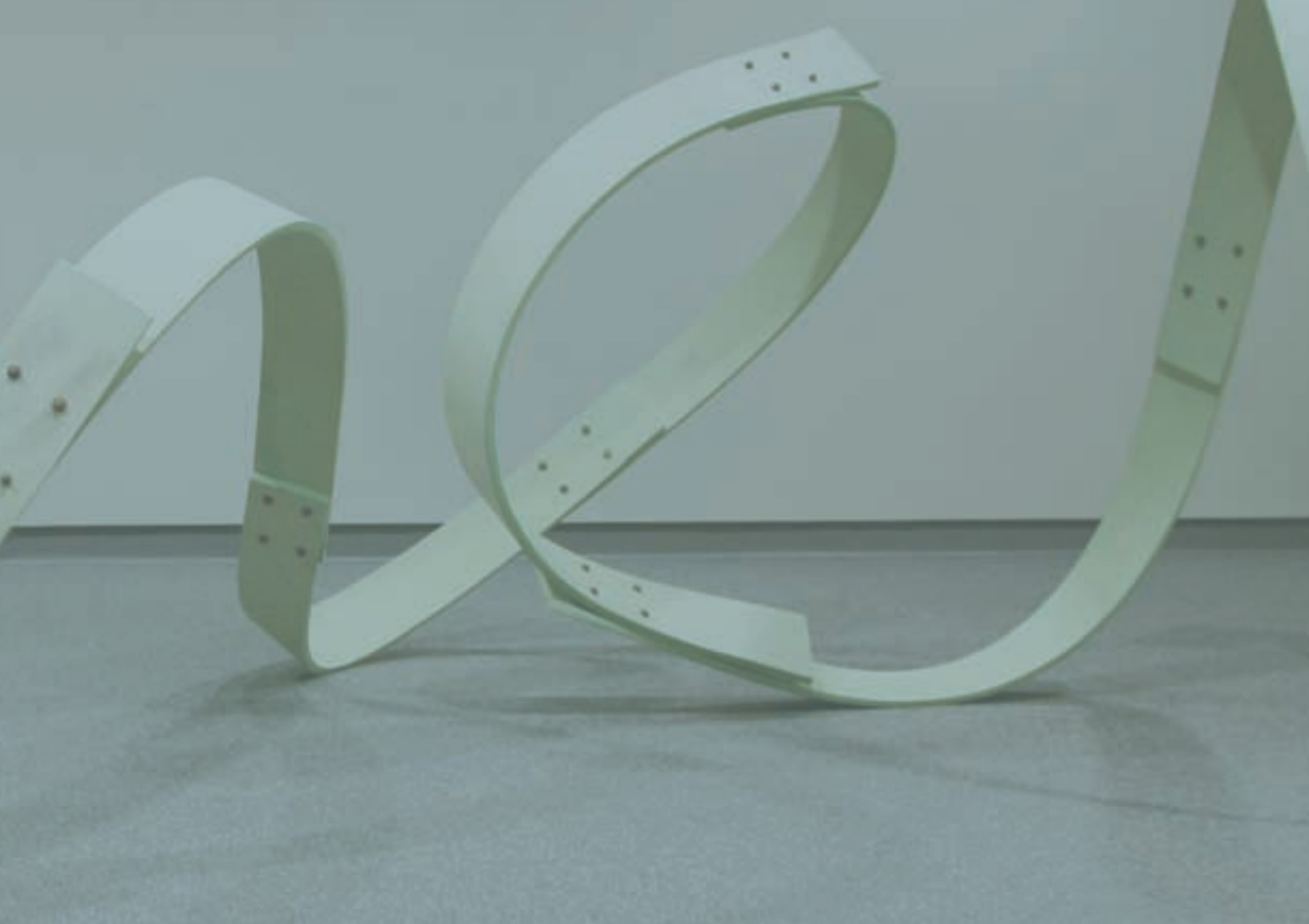
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