

2005 SoFA No. 5 GALLERY

A newsletter for friends and supporters of the
Indiana University School of Fine Arts Gallery



A viewer inspects *A Spoonful Weighs a Ton* by Jane Callister
from **Possible Worlds**



Detail of a frame from **Errant Behaviors** by Anne Wilson

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Camellia Red, 2003, pigment inkjet print, 11"x40", Osamu James Nakagawa from **Ma-Between the Past**

ma-between the past

Ma-Between the Past, a solo exhibit by School of Fine Arts faculty member Osamu James Nakagawa, was presented September 3–October 2, 2004, in the East gallery.

間 **Ma**: room between two things or gap between two matters.¹

Born in New York City in 1962, Osamu James Nakagawa was seven months old when his Japanese-born parents took him and his older brother back to Japan. Fifteen years later the family returned to the United States, where he attended high school in Houston.

"The Japanese word 'Ma' (間) means a temporal as well as spatial in-between-ness," says Nakagawa. "I experienced this gap in my memories of both the United States and Japan, between my own memory and the

family history that corresponds to the history of my heritages. *Ma* visually and conceptually bridges gaps that exist between those places and times.

"*Ma* views my family history through the cultural heritages of both Japan and the United States, two cultures that have been closely involved for the last 150 years. This relationship has been deeply intertwined with the history of modernization before and after World War II, and through working with the archives I inherited, I saw this recent history unfold in the context of my own family."

Using family photographs and 8-mm filmstrips, as well as images that he has taken, Nakagawa juxtaposed these images to create a series of work that searches for a link to his past and its future passage to his daughter.

Ma-Between the Past is a beautiful and thoughtful statement on family history and memory. It makes us realize that not only are we unable to escape our history, but that consciousness of it affects the way we live our day-to-day lives. ■

¹ *Kojien* (Japanese Dictionary), 1991, Iwanami Shyoten.

lenses and loops

Lenses and Loops was at the SoFA Gallery October 15–November 19, 2004.

Indiana University alumnus Neil Goodman says his large-scale sculptures act as "a lens, lines moving through space that charge the landscape like lightning, a great theater."

Goodman's stark, yet elegant pieces fit the Center and West galleries of SoFA amazingly well, creating a true interactive environment for visitors. His sculpture is intimately linked to the northwest Indiana region, where he has lived and worked for most of his life. Each sculpture frames the landscape with elegant, hand-carved lines outlining three-dimensional space.

"As an artist and area native, I have been greatly influenced by the industrial rustbelt topography of

northwest Indiana," says Goodman. "I have often marveled at the fantastic and uniquely sculptural shapes of many of the mills, bridges, barges, and cranes indigenous to the area. My work is both a reflection of my environment as well as a visual link to it. My interest in locating this body of work in northwest Indiana seems pertinent to both the aesthetic quality of the images as well as its influences."

Goodman is currently developing an ambitious sculpture garden in one of the most visible public spaces on the Indiana University Northwest campus. The large-scale sculptures in this exhibit were prototypes for bronze works to be installed at the sculpture garden in Gary. ■



Installation view of **Lenses and Loops** featuring sculpture by Neil Goodman

otherworlds: midwest urban and industrial landscapes

As a companion exhibit with *Lenses and Loops*, the SoFA Gallery presented *Otherworlds*, paintings and photographs by three Midwest artists. Indianapolis artist Mark Jacobson and Chicago artists Michelle Keim and Terry Evans described a variety of environments, from the barrenness of Midwestern malls and suburban shopping areas, to the industrial landscapes of paper mills and coal plants.

While both painting and photography were represented, the photographers approached their subject in remarkably diverse ways. Michelle Keim presents beautifully lush color images of industrial plants at work, always at night, and always with the plume of smoke or haze that illustrates the workings of the complex. These images reflect the industrial power that looms in the rural Midwest, the busywork going on behind the scenes that is hidden from view for most of us.

Terry Evans creates quite a different view of the landscape in her aerial photographs. Her images of industrial and suburban roads and

overpasses look at the urban landscape and its relationship to the way people organize urban and suburban spaces. Evans' work has a detached perspective, warranting closer inspection and consideration.

Marc Jacobson creates panoramic paintings of urban and suburban landscapes that we all either live within or have experienced. His beautiful, painterly renderings of the kind of spaces that all look alike, exude a familiarity yet have a structure and beauty that we often don't appreciate when we are there. He creates very ordered spaces that, while bleak, seem better than the real thing. ■



Gallery visitors view Michelle Keim's photographs in **Otherworlds**



Installation view of **Lounge**

lounge

Lounge, a night of video art, was at the SoFA Gallery October 8, 2004.

The SoFA Gallery was transformed into a lounge environment for one autumn night, creating a relaxed and informal place to view and enjoy media art. The space was entirely given over to an interactive multimedia exhibit, featuring video art and installations by both student and faculty artists. A special feature of *Lounge* included live broadcasts of the second U.S. presidential debates on four different networks. ■



possible worlds

The group exhibit *Possible Worlds* was featured at the SoFA Gallery September 3–October 2, 2004.

Possible Worlds, curated by SoFA Associate Director Dana Sperry, featured the work of seven emerging and well-established artists from Chicago, New York, California, and Texas. Works in the exhibit ranged from painting to installations, photography to video, highlighting various ways in which contemporary artists depict both real and imagined worlds.

“With brightly colored and weightless landscapes, floating bodies, and mysterious blinking eyes, Jane Callister’s paintings, Sabrina Raaf’s *Test People* photographs, and the multimedia installation *Limbo* by Scott Roberts are the visual material of dreams and nightmares and contain the psychology that spills over into our everyday lives,” said Sperry in the gallery guide to the show.

Made from cardboard and tape, Scott Robert’s *Black Hole Maquette* humorously questions the reliability of images of things that are unseeable. Meanwhile, Philip Argent’s landscape- and architecture-based abstractions refer to digital landscapes in our daily lives—including cyberspace and the information superhighway.

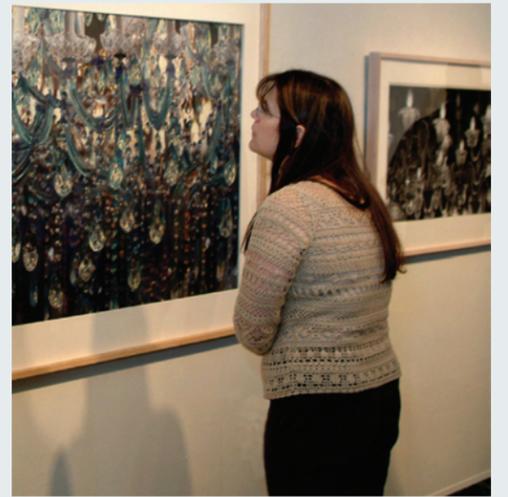
Sabrina Raaf’s surprising and haunting tribute to the 1999 Mars Polar Lander, *Lost*, continues the speculation about a planet that seems just outside of space scientists’ reach. Prince Thomas’s series *Fashion Accessories* takes us back to Earth, questioning our relationship to modern pharmaceuticals and the potential for “better living through science.”

The exhibit took viewers from Thomas’s world of magic problem-solving pills to the realm of a continual golden past with Al Souza’s collages, which construct gorgeous Edwardian fantasies from puzzle pieces.

The gallery presented several events and lectures during *Possible Worlds*, including talks and student critiques by Jane Callister, Phillip Argent, Al Souza, and Prince Thomas, and extended visits by Chicago artists Scott Roberts and Sabrina Raaf. ■



Interacting with the art at **Possible Worlds**



Installation view of **Chiaroscuro**, which featured the work of Edward Bernstein

chiaroscuro

Chiaroscuro was at the SoFA Gallery January 11–February 15, 2005.

Professor Edward Bernstein’s digitally printed series of mixed media prints, *Chiaroscuro*, were created in response to the events of September 11. While in Venice in the autumn of 2003, the artist photographed beautiful Murano glass chandeliers. Bernstein utilizes architecture and images of reflective light in these prints to represent the elusive characteristics of memory and to evoke the past. Cast-shadow images of his sculpture *Tower* appear in the prints, emitting a sense of violence and loss. ■

hypertextiles

Hypertextiles, featuring the work of seven artists from the United States and Canada, was conceived with the idea that all artistic mediums are in a constant state of growth and change. Each of the seven artists in this exhibit uses advanced computer technology to create handmade textile pieces. They employ new computer software and technology to create printed and woven pieces that challenge our preconceptions about textiles.

Four of the artists create woven pieces, incorporating digitized images, photography, and the techniques of Jacquard weaving.

Six pieces by Lia Cook combine influences drawn from painting, photography, and digital media. Her recent work explores the sensuality of fabric and the human response to touch. The large-scale portraits in the exhibit are images from her childhood. Louise Lemieux Bérubé also utilizes photographic images, digitizing them and translating their grey values, then replacing each value with a weave. (A weave is the way in which threads interlace, mixing different percentages of dark and light threads.) Like Cook, she then weaves the pieces by hand on a Jacquard loom.

Hypertextiles was at the SoFA Gallery February 11–March 11, 2005.

Bhakti Ziek successfully combines traditional textile concerns with an interest in technology. Having studied weaving in Mexico and Guatemala, Ziek incorporates traditional imagery into her pieces. Her works in this exhibit were also woven on a Jacquard loom, with two of the works displayed as two-sided pieces. Emily DuBois is known for creating elemental works inspired by natural forms and beauty, and her woven pieces are clearly influenced by painting.

Three artists represented in the exhibit create printed and dyed pieces. Anne McKenzie Nickolson’s works are planned using Adobe Illustrator and constructed by hand. Michael James’s machine-pieced quilts contain digitally developed and printed cotton, with images drawn from photographic sources. Susan Brandeis’s intricately appliquéd constructed pieces begin with digital designs and printing, but are transformed by the artist through labor-intensive dyeing and machine- and hand-embroidering.

In each instance, the artist has not let digital techniques surmount the idea of the finished piece as a tactile and beautiful object—this may be why this work is so compelling. ■



Embedded Digits, Lia Cook, 2004, woven cotton, 37"×50", from **Hypertextiles**



Installation view of **Errant Behaviors**

errant behaviors

Errant Behaviors was presented at the SoFA Gallery February 11–March 11, 2005.

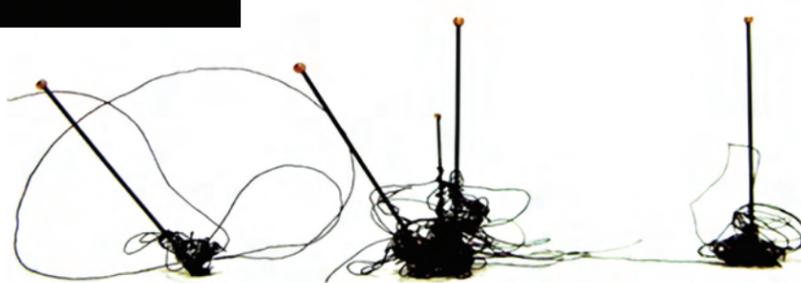
Errant Behaviors, a video and sound installation by Chicago artist Anne Wilson, was exhibited in conjunction with *Hypertextiles*. This installation featured animations of Wilson’s small fiber creations, which explore the relationship between humor and the dark side. *Errant Behaviors* illustrates and embodies rude actions, quirky growths, and playful and sinister relationships.

Wilson is a professor in the Fiber and Material Studies department at the School of the Art Institute of

Chicago. Collaborating with her on the project were composer Shawn Decker, animator Cat Solen, and post-production animator Daniel Torrente.

Originally created for the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston, and dramatically reconfigured for the SoFA Gallery, *Errant Behaviors* emerged from Wilson’s sculpture *Topologies* and the reactions people had towards it. *Topologies* was first shown in the 2002 Whitney Biennial, where viewers’ imaginations deposited cityscapes and futuristic worlds onto the piece. In *Errant Behaviors*, the latent associations and meanings of *Topologies* are made overt, emphasized, enlivened, and acted out. ■

Courtesy of the Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago (© 2004 Anne Wilson)



Left: Frame from **Errant Behaviors** by Anne Wilson

student shows. . .



Students work in a variety of media, as seen in these examples from recent exhibits.

The SoFA Gallery presented a number of student shows during the fall and spring semesters, highlighting the excellent work by our students from all levels. The works of undergraduate, BA, BFA, and MFA students was displayed in many different formats, and all areas of the School of Fine Arts participated in showing and exhibiting work and attending gallery talks and openings. Student work is one of the most exciting aspects of the gallery for visitors, because they can see the evidence of developing creative minds at work. Please come join us at one of our many openings and see for yourself! Check our website for current information. ■

. . .and students abroad

For the past few years, the School of Fine Arts and the IU Office of Overseas Study have partnered to offer summer Fine Arts programs in Europe. These programs, taught by Fine Arts faculty, are located in Italy and France. Edward Bernstein heads the printmaking program in Venice; Martha MacLeish taught drawing in Florence, Italy; and for the first time this year, Jeffrey Wolin taught photography in Paris. The gallery annually exhibits student work produced in these three programs, and highlights the exciting opportunities for our students. ■

featured MFA student: **Greg Stahly**

Greg Stahly completed his MFA degree in ceramics in May 2005, and plans to exhibit his work in Chicago and other places. Although he came from a traditional ceramics background, Stahly has been making sculpture with materials that suggest systems and structures of social improvement. His inflatable sculptures refer to medical equipment and are remotely technology-based, objects that confront their viewers with science and mechanics. His work leaves us with the belief that these devices must be good for us, but we don't know exactly how. ■



Installation view of Greg Stahly's MFA thesis show

upcoming exhibit

human nature

Human Nature is a two-part exhibition of visual art and scientific imaging, featuring examples of contemporary visual art that examine our relationship to nature and current explorations in the life sciences.

This two-part exhibit will be presented at the School of Fine Arts (SoFA) Gallery on the Bloomington campus in 2006.

It is necessary for our culture to understand and gather information about new research in biotechnology, mapping the genome, cloning, genetic engineering, stem-cell research, and other issues. Contemporary artists are creating works about the humanistic, cultural, biological, and ethical concerns related to these themes and can provide timely insight and an access point for cultural reflection.

Since the 1980s there has been a resurgence of interest in artists addressing themes related to nature and science. Early on, these themes were reflected in high-profile works about the corporeal body. With new science on stem-cell research, cloning, and other discoveries, artists have begun incorporating concepts and the implications of this research into their work. They are re-interpreting scientific discoveries and addressing related ethical and moral issues in unique visual ways. In addition, there is more visualization and imaging in science than ever before. Images are integral in today's scientific research, and the results have underlying value as tangible objects that can be examined and addressed on a human scale as visual objects. Scientific imaging creates a bridge in understanding the abstract nature of research, and initiates questions about the relationship of art and science. ■

director's message

I feel very fortunate to be able to share our exciting and innovative programs at the SoFA Gallery with the university community and the public. We try our utmost to present the very best contemporary art that our budgets will allow—and I think our programs have improved each year since 1987, when I became director. The constantly changing exhibits allow us to feature the work of the excellent students and faculty in the School of Fine Arts and the most vital and exciting professional artists nationwide.

I hope that you will consider the SoFA Gallery in your annual giving plans. Your contributions are essential to our operations. They not only assist us in hiring student employees who keep the gallery running (providing them with important professional practice experience), but also allow us to present the finest and most important contemporary programming possible.

best regards,
Betsy Stirratt
Director, SoFA Gallery



Installation view of **Lounge**

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If you have questions, corrections, or comments concerning the publications, please contact the School of Fine Arts Gallery at (812) 855-8490 or sofa@indiana.edu.

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